

Book for Review

Matrimony :

ITS ✂ ✂ ✂
OBLIGATIONS
AND ✂ ✂ ✂
PRIVILEGES

A Book for ::
Men & Women
Who Think. ::

BY
MONA BAIRD

Price 1s. 6d. Net.

HEALTH PROMOTION, Ltd.,
19/23, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.





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MATRIMONY

ITS OBLIGATIONS & PRIVILEGES

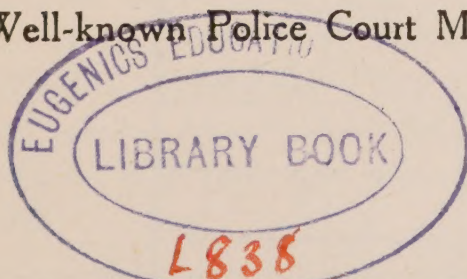
A Book for Men and
Women Who Think.

BY

MONA BAIRD.

With a Preface by THOMAS HOLMES,

The Well-known Police Court Missionary.



HEALTH PROMOTION, LTD.,

19/23, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.

“ These things shall be, a loftier race
Than e'er the world hath known shall rise,
With flame of freedom in their souls
And light of knowledge in their eyes.”

To
That Race
I Dedicate this Book.

Mona Baird.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

NEVER was there a more propitious time for the launching of a series of practical and sanely written books on the big problems of life. Everywhere, voices are being raised in demand of cleaner lives, higher moral standards; but how can these things be if the people are left in ignorance? It is not sufficient to denounce; reforms are wrought by efforts to enlighten and to point out the paths to be trodden.

In the endeavour to impart the knowledge necessary to supply the foundation upon which nobler lives may be built, this little book—the first of several—has been published. Each of the books will be written by a well-known author, and each will be written in the light of present needs and latest developments.

This book may be taken as the criterion of all; there will be nothing frivolous in them, neither will there be anything objectionable. They will supply sound, clean, educative reading on vital questions; and each will have its special appeal.

DR. MARY SCHARLIEB, M.S.,
The famous Physician and Surgeon,
says of
“ Matrimony—
Its Obligations and Privileges ”:

“ I have read the little book with great interest and am in accord with almost all that it contains. It is, of course, impossible for any two human beings to face such a subject entirely from the same point of view.”

After reading this excellent little book
I can only say—

“ Unto the Pure, ALL THINGS are pure,
Which are ordained of God;
And to the Wise, ALL wisdom's sure,
Which is from heaven outpoured.”

LADY ELIZABETH B——.

PREFACE.

I HAVE read this book with the greatest of interest and delight, for my experience has taught me that plain teaching on the questions dealt with is not only sorely needed but is absolutely necessary for the vitality and happiness of the nation.

The book is in excellent taste, written with great tact, dealing with matters that have only too long been left to the quack or to those who have pandered to the lower instincts.

Every father and every mother, every young man and every maiden, ought to possess a copy of this book and mark well the lessons it contains.

It is not given to ordinary parents to have sufficient knowledge and sufficient wisdom to be able to convey in a natural way knowledge that is of vital importance to their children. This book will do it for them, and while it instructs the children they love, it will also, I am sure, bring home to the parents some guidance for themselves, for, alas, experience does not always enforce knowledge.

It is, then, an eminently sane book. I have heard of "Sanctified Common Sense"—herein it is, and written plainly too.

In other directions this book, whatever its sale and acceptance, is a distinct success. It will neither offend the virtuous nor satisfy the prurient. It

conveys high thoughts, and being accepted it will develop courtesy, it will serve to keep down the base in man, convey a love of practical truth and it must help to develop a true manhood and a more perfect, because a better informed, womanhood. It glorifies, yet not unduly, that wonderful sense, power or passion "this maiden love for a maid," a thing so fruitful of real joy and abiding comfort, or, on the other hand, so destructive of everything that in this world is worth having.

We are male and female, the great Creator made no mistake, there is no inequality in this sexual arrangement. How can there be?

So because this book gives straight teaching and points out very plainly the duties and the dangers of both male and female I welcome it. I endorse every word of it. I heartily recommend it and fervently hope that it will be abundantly blessed.

THOMAS HOLMES.

FOREWORD.

AND the Lord said: "It is not meet that the man should be alone; I will make him a helpmeet for him."

In those few words are contained the whole of the Christian belief in the sacredness of marriage, and our reason for the condemnation of marriage other than as a divine ordinance.

It contains the husband's duty. His wife is a gift from God, and to be treasured as such, and the wife's privilege—to be a meet help for one who was made in "the image of God."

Yet how far from divine are many of the marriages contracted to-day.

"I don't think I shall get married at all," said a sensible business girl to the writer lately. "Why should I? I have a good position with a firm who treat their employées well. My income is sufficient for my needs. I dress well, get plenty of amusement, a nice holiday each year, and, above all, am free. Why should I marry?"

"There is the future," I suggested, "when you are too old to work."

"The future? That is provided for, of course. Insurance is compulsory in my business house. I have nothing to fear in the future."

"But there is the companionship of married life; you will be very lonely as you grow older."

"I don't know," thoughtfully. "Within the last few years many of my friends have married. I don't think there is one of them with whom I should like to change places—not one whose husband would satisfy me in the way of companionship in the years to come."

"Well, I hope not," I said, teasingly; "that would mean that you were in love with your friend's husband—a dreadful state of affairs."

"Yet I believe there would be more hope for England if business girls of my age were in love, even though it were with other girls' husbands, than there is now," shrewdly. "What does it mean? Take half a dozen of my friends. A.'s husband cannot support her. She lives miserably on her father's charity. B. has been married three years and has three children. She has lost looks, love, almost life itself, in her struggle with household cares and failing health. C. and her husband resolved to have no children. She has 'a good time' in between the serious illnesses which result from their methods of evading parenthood. D. would give her eyes for a child. Her doctor tells her it is hopeless. They waited so long making sure of a good home—they will have for ever to do without the first essential for happiness in the home—children. E. married a reformed rake, the sort that is popularly supposed to make the best husband. They have had two children—both of whom, luckily for themselves, died in infancy. F.'s husband lives abroad in a spot to which he can't take his wife. He has four months with her

out of every two years, but is then often so eaten up with fever that she spends his holiday nursing him. Yet they are really the happiest. They see least of each other."

"My dear, what a disheartening catalogue!" I exclaimed. "Your friends have been very unfortunate in their married life."

"That's the worst of it," she said sombrely. "I believe they are absolutely typical, and until young men and women know the facts of marriage they will keep on making shipwreck of their lives together. Why doesn't someone write a book on 'The Truth about Marriage'? I believe in getting married—most women do—but I am not going in for it unless I can see my way to a fair share of happiness for myself, my husband, and our children. There's such a lot of silly rot talked about marriage. A bridal veil covers a multitude of follies. Two silly single people don't make one wise married one—now do they?"

"No," I said, smiling again at her vehemence. "I quite agree with you, but, my dear, marriage is the goal for every healthy human being. To be married in order to beget children, that is what you were created for. Don't you believe that?"

"I suppose I do; but look at the risks. Now I'm in an insurance office. We insure you against every conceivable accident that could happen to you, to your house, to your manservant and maidservant, to your horse, and your ass. Why don't people insure against unhappiness in married life? You wouldn't hear nearly so much about 'Should bachelors be taxed?' in the silly season if one could. And the misery that would be averted," she continued, thought-

fully. "You know, we girls who go to the City every day don't walk about with our eyes shut. I wonder how much of the white slave traffic, and other hideous plague spots in our great cities, are due to unhappy homes in our suburbs and ignorance in our villages? Oh, if we could only insure married happiness, I believe, I really believe, I would get married myself."

Her words set me thinking. There is so much nonsense written and spoken about marriage. So much sentimentality and so little real sentiment. That time of all others when a young man and woman should see clearly and judge fairly is just the time when, from one reason and another, judgment is most obscured.

There is, first of all, the illusion of the senses. Nature, wisely enough, or man would cease on the earth, has ordained that all the processes of procreation should give the utmost pleasure to its participants. To fall in love is happiness. To have that feeling reciprocated is unbounded joy.

Such a glamour does Nature throw over the loved one that beauty is seen in the plainest, so long as there exists that strange affinity which we call "love" between them. To consummate that love which began in the mind and spirit, in physical union, so that "they twain shall be one flesh," is the highest happiness human nature can experience on this earth. Man is a god, then—he is a creator.

But all this glamour obscures reason. That is why so many marriages are unhappy. In looking forward to the gratification of the senses the young couple are apt to forget that passion is not all. While no marriage can be happy which is without passion

at some stage of its progress, we believe firmly that no marriage can be happy which is based purely on passion.

“ Roses and kisses alike we’ve known and enjoyed to the fullest :

Yesterday’s roses are dead, those of next year are not born.

Autumn comes on apace. Oh, take my head on your bosom,

Let us reason awhile between a kiss and a kiss.

Body and soul of me are bent and bowed to your service,

Take my body and soul, give me your body and soul :
Trusty and anxious servants, bound the one to the other,

Seek not to set them apart, each has station in love.

Love me and understand me, give me affection and passion,

Give me a place in your mind, give me a place in your heart,

Long life lies before us, years of living together,
Reason is not enough : kiss me, beloved, again.”

True love, you see, consists of two factors, and, while passion for the object loved is the first, reverence should undoubtedly be the second. Man is so constituted that he can respect a woman he does not love. He cannot keep on loving a woman he does not respect. And the same holds good with women. How often do excesses of one kind or another, either in temper or appetite, so destroy a woman’s respect for a man that gradually her love is undermined. Little by little, as respect for his character is lessened, love goes.

She yields to his caresses with less and less willingness, until, at last, actual repugnance takes the place of affection, and then, good-bye to that holiest of all joys—married happiness.

For these reasons it is essential that the choice of a partner for life should be a real choice, and not a purblind following of a perverted instinct. Once “in love” there is very little possibility of choice. Love is proverbially blind, but before deliberately shutting his eyes and allowing sense to master him, it is open to every reasonable being to consider what the glamour of love is leading him into. There are certain questions which every young man and woman about to marry should ask themselves—certain facts it is essential to their future happiness they should know.

These facts are set out as plainly and simply in the following pages as possible. If understood and followed, they will insure that one, at least, of the ingredients of that true love without which no marriage should be consummated is present—the ingredient of respect, based on knowledge. This, we may make sure of ourselves. The other necessity—that of passion—is God’s gift to man, bestowed when “man and woman made He them.”

Together they make true love.

May every reader of these pages so mix these ingredients that the result shall be that perfect union which makes heaven of every earthly home.

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CHAPTER I.

WHY PEOPLE MARRY.

“Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do.”—*Old Proverb.*

“One hand cannot clap alone.”—*Indian Proverb.*

“PLEASE’M can I have a few days holiday?” asked a very pretty maid of mine once.

“Whatever for, Lizzie?” I questioned. “You know it isn’t holiday time yet.”

“I know, ma’am. But my chap’s out of work, so we thought we might as well get married while we had the chance.”

This real dialogue sounds like a joke out of *Punch*, doesn’t it? That it is not, anyone who knows the working classes well will testify.

With many, too, who are far above the working classes in station, marriage is undertaken with as little preparation, either of mind or circumstances.

Proverbs are the essence of popular wisdom, and of marriage undertaken lightly such wisdom has much to say. Pity it is that such wise thoughts are usually *afterthoughts*. The wisdom of experience is always the best, but it may be too dearly bought, as many a middle-aged man and woman, sitting among the ruins of their married life, can testify.

The reason why people marry should be, as C. H. Spurgeon once said, the same as why they preach —“Because they must.”

St. Paul, too, gives the same reason. There should be real necessity. In the First Epistle to the Corinthians, Chapter VII., we have the whole of the Pauline doctrine on marriage. He seems to imply that though marriage is good, to be unmarried is better. Now this is a counsel of perfection which

may suit such as are called to be Apostles, but most certainly is not for the ordinary human being. The unmarried man or woman is an incomplete being, but—and here is where many who desire to come to the full use of all their functions go wrong; there is a right and a wrong way to completion.

An old writer has likened men and women to half-circles. Somewhere their other half is rolling around. What a tragedy if, through idleness or ignorance of what is really needed to make the circle complete, young people are satisfied to take the first that offers, careless of whether there is either mental or physical suitability in the match.

Marriages again are often entered into from sheer idleness—lack of purpose in life. Holiday acquaintanceships are responsible for many misfits in the marriage mart. Now unconventionality is the salt of ordinary life. Too much propriety, too much fear of Mrs. Grundy, and what the world will say, make life a burden. But on the other hand, unconventionally-begun friendships should never be allowed to develop so that marriage is a necessity to save honour.

Mothers of marriageable daughters—and of marriageable sons, too—cannot be too careful here. The cure for clandestine friendships and secret meetings is confidence between parent and child. Let the boys and girls know that you are interested in their friendships. Never act so that your children feel they may not bring their friends into the home circle. Incalculable harm is done if your daughter feels she must say good-bye to her friend a street away in case “her people” see, if your son is driven to making the acquaintance of girls and women who allow themselves to be “picked up.” Because of this lack of confidence between parents and children, most popular seaside

resorts resemble a market. There is a band to provide the sensuous lure of music. The men line the outer edge of the promenade, pier or enclosure, as the case may be—the girls parade up and down, flaunting such charms, either natural or artificial, as they possess, until a certain glance—a sign—is given and returned. The couple move out of the limelight to the seclusion of cliff or country walk. The girl may not be impure in thought or deed, but the bloom is rubbed off. The man's ideal of womanhood is lowered—both become less and less capable of a great passion, upon which happiness in the married state together may be based. Love is frittered away by frivolous flirtation—if by nothing worse. Such flirtation a well-known writer has aptly described as “mental adultery.”

On this important subject do not let me be misunderstood. Some unfortunate young people there are who must make acquaintances in this casual way if they are to have any friends of the opposite sex at all. They are the lonely ones of the world, who, from one reason and another, are shut out from those natural advantages which home and parents bestow on more fortunate starters in life's race. To those handicapped in this way the most earnest words of warning must be addressed.

Girls, do not let any man, thus unconventionally introduced, take you to his private rooms, or even for long, lonely walks, away from where help might be obtained at need. Get acquainted before you get friendly. Try to meet in some healthful open-air amusement. Exercise exorcises false sentiment. It is very difficult to imagine yourself in love with a man whom you can beat at tennis. There is no room for prudery and mock modesty, or for harmful sexual excitement either, in the open-air swimming bath. If

you can pull together well on the river you are likely to pull together well on the matrimonial stream. Boys and girls, men and women, who meet on the level ground of physical exercise, properly undertaken in suitable garments, have little left of that harmful curiosity about sex matters which leads so often to wrong.

Then recreation, we know, is change of occupation. If your work is sedentary, you will welcome games and physical exercise in your leisure. If your labour is manual, less strenuous pleasures will be sought.

Reading is one of the purest joys to the educated, and may become so to the uneducated the more it is indulged in. But mind what you read. To read nothing but novels is as injurious to the mind as a course of sweet-eating, and nothing else, would be to the teeth.

“I never read poetry. I can’t understand it,” I heard a grown man say lately. He might as well have said “I never take any notice of flowers” or “I can’t bear music.” Deliberately to cut out poetry from one’s reading is as bad as deliberately to close one’s eyes to beauty, one’s ears to sound. Poetry—the best poetry—and there is plenty of it about—gives one high ideals. I would go farther, and say that two real lovers of the best poetry coming together could hardly fail to be happily married. This sounds a statement somewhat far-fetched, and of course it is true that happy marriages may exist between two people who could not repeat a whole poem between them. But in good poetry there is so much humour, sanctified common sense, love of nature, knowledge of human nature, high aspiration, noble endeavour, and pure ideals, that real poetry-lovers must make good lovers—and satisfactory partners.

Is there in life or literature a more beautiful love story than the true one of Robert Browning and his wife Elizabeth Barrett—two of England's foremost poets? And although it is not given to all of us to be able to make poetry which shall live, we can, every one, by the wise use of our leisure in cultivating high ideals, make "Life, Death, and the Great for ever one grand, sweet song."

Appetite grows by what it feeds on. This is as true in the mental as in the physical world.

You may not imagine you have any appetite for historical works, for dry biographies, but do not, for that reason, indulge in the reading of light literature exclusively. Too often this class of reading so excites the sexual instincts as to lead desire to outweigh prudence, and every other sensible consideration, in order to gratify it. Every young man and woman knows the class of book I mean. They are not always "French" novels, either. They are those books which on the stalls are kept on a separate shelf, which might well be labelled "Danger." If it is a lending library, they are the books which show most signs of wear and tear; or they are those which are "banned" by respectable libraries. In these works lust is either justified or glorified. In either case, the moral of the book is wrong, and it is as impossible for the young man or woman who reads them continually to have right ideas on marriage as it is for a stream poisoned at its source to become pure in its flow.

Shops which purvey this sort of trash, more deadly in its effects than indecent photographs and suggestive postcards, because less openly pernicious, should be prosecuted. More, libraries, both public and private, should be licensed—just as much as public-houses—and their licences cancelled for the same reasons.

Public libraries usually are controlled by men who have enough public spirit to see that our youth is not contaminated by having access to such mental foulness. Private book shops should be supervised in the same way, and will be, perhaps, in the day when those who legislate in such matters can discriminate between wise enlightenment and unhealthy stimulation.

The fruit of idleness, of unwise use of leisure, of opportunity for intercourse between the sexes, is too often a lack of self-respect which leads to dangerous flirtation.

No healthy boy or girl under eighteen should think of their comrades, at work or play, as "the other sex." Imagination should be healthily employed, as I have already said, in adequate mental exercise. Boys and girls should go about, not in couples, but in groups. There is a great deal of sickly sentiment about "sweet seventeen—never been kissed." Kissing, even between girl friends, is often carried to excess. One wonders, sometimes, indeed, if it is not indulged in not from affection, but to irritate the young man who is looking on into envy. When one realises, as thoughtful people must, that kissing is but a shadow of that physical union which is only felt in perfection in the marriage state, one cannot but deplore the waste of emotion which kissing without "meaning anything" implies.

Kissing is one of the sacraments of life—a bodily act with a spiritual meaning. Indulged in too frequently, it may lead the young and thoughtless almost imperceptibly to such compulsory partnerships as they will all their lives regret. Such indulgence is condemned once for all in the stage villain's exclamation "I love you—curse you!" as he kisses the heroine.

Everything of unwise in courtship, of unhappy

in love, is summed up in those seemingly absurd words.

Yet kissing, as an expression of real affection, is so instinctive as to be almost divine. The mother who did not wish to kiss her children would be a monster. The kiss of friendship is hallowed by long custom, and it is noteworthy that in countries where kissing is unknown—such as Japan—morality, as Western people reckon morality, is almost unknown too. The image of kissing as a caress—the kiss of the sun on the waves—of the wind on the leaves—has been used by poets from time immemorial. It is only when such bodily contact is used in an unscrupulous or thoughtless way to suggest lustful desires that kissing degenerates into a practice which must be condemned.

There is a divine necessity for marriage. That is the necessity spoken of by St. Paul, and implied in the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon's epigram. True love provides that necessity—not the obligation to make whole a damaged reputation.

“Stealing from God” is what a little friend of mine quaintly calls the fruit of a union which has not been sanctified by law or hallowed by religious ceremony.

As we have seen, idleness, trashy reading, low ideals, lack of self-respect, dangerous flirting, are often the reason “WHY PEOPLE MARRY.” Such compulsory or hasty marriages do not often lead to anything but disaster. If you do not want to shipwreck the matrimonial barque in the first storm it may encounter, see to it that your mental and spiritual equipment is the outcome of knowledge of each other's real nature and requirements.

CHAPTER II.

MARRIAGE IN OTHER LANDS.

“A man may woo where he will, but must wed where he’s weird.”—*Scotch Proverb*.

“Lo, how the woman once was wooed:
 Forth leapt the savage from his lair
 And felled her, and to nuptials rude
 He dragged her, bleeding, by the hair.”
Coventry Patmore.

WHAT a fruitful thought it is that the first known “way of a man with a maid” was to take her by force! Man has progressed far since those days, but it is interesting to trace the genesis of customs which still survive in countries we call civilised, and to find out how little we differ, in reality, from our rude ancestors.

Marriage practices in all lands, in remote times, seem to have been governed by the rule that might is right.

In the Malacca Peninsula, for instance, the bride challenges the bridegroom to race her in a canoe. Among the Syrian Christians to this day the bride must pretend reluctance, and must be brought to her husband’s house by force. Considering how often it happens in the East that marriages are brought about by outside parties—marriage brokers—as in Japan, for instance, so that it happens at times that the bride-to-be has not even seen the husband-to-be before marriage, this reluctance may well be real, and not at all feigned. In Abyssinia the bridegroom captures the bride, and rushes along the public way with his captive in his arms—whether screaming or not, travellers do not state.

These appropriations by brute force belong to an age when most things were decided in that way. Women had no choice in the matter, but, once married, she and her children were considered worth fighting for, and she would then belong to the conqueror. In these days, when money is might, it too often happens that the man with the most money is the winner in the matrimonial market. The practice of buying wives is one that is condemned as savagery, but it belongs to a later stage of human progress than that of fighting for the wives. It is perhaps a point which need not be decided here which custom was the more civilised, but it is certainly striking to notice that the earlier one provoked the most artistic results.

The works of Plutarch and Homer, all that is most beautiful and inspiring in classic poetry and literature, are founded on the fact that beauty belonged to valour in the old days. We have woven this idea into a proverb—"None but the brave deserve the fair"—and though men fight now for ideas and not for wives, women of to-day may still inspire chivalrous and mighty deeds.

On the other hand, few people are so friendless that they are exempt from the law of providing wedding presents, and this custom is a direct survival of the time when marriage by purchase was in vogue. Even this is done differently in different lands. In Japan—the upside-down country—the bride gives presents to the bridegroom and his family; while in China the marriage presents are inserted in the bridal contract in much the same way as the higher classes in this country have their "marriage settlements." Perhaps Bulgaria and India are the most satisfactory places to be a bride in. In the former country the price of the bride is hung in silver and gold coins

about her neck, her father standing by, meanwhile, to raise the price according to his mental value of his daughter; while in India the two fathers lay out the purchase money in jewellery for the bride. In this country the providing of the trousseau is considered the bride's prerogative, but it is far otherwise in other countries. The Esquimos and Roumanians both consider it incumbent on the bridgroom-to-be, for instance, to provide for the bride's clothes, the fact that, in the former country, fur, which must be procured by the man's efforts, is the chief item of his wife's wardrobe, being perhaps accountable for this.

It is a far cry from these customs to our "Married Woman's Property Act," yet from this idea of marriage by purchase comes that of dower, which is the wife's exclusive property, and which among Hebrews and Mahommedans it is considered a religious duty to provide. In France and Italy, too, few girls are married without a "dot." Scotch lassies need not come so provided to their husbands, but one has a shrewd suspicion that the dowerless girl is less likely to find a suitor than her more fortunate sister. In England sentiment very often has more of a say in the matter than common sense, but even in this country it is certainly the gilded pill which is the most readily swallowed.

A variation of the bought wife, and rather a pleasing one from the romantic point of view, is the one "Married by service." The old Biblical story of Jacob and his twice seven years' service for Rachel still rings sweetly in the ears of those who believe in the essential worth of pure womanhood, and that the husband should prove himself worthy not only in manly strength and in goods, but in character, of the woman he essays to marry. In Ceylon and in some

North American tribes this custom still holds good. Seldom is the time of probation so long as the Biblical one, but probably the longest is considered short by the expectant bridegroom "for the love that he bears" his dusky Rachel.

In these days of so-called marriage from choice it is well to remember that in some whom we might consider primitive people the girl is still free to marry the man of her heart. Among the tribes on the Upper Mississippi, where the girl is wooed by her lover playing on a reed flute outside her wigwam until her heart is touched, she may give the longed-for sign of assent—or not—as she wishes. But though she may consent to be his first wife, he need not promise to make her his only one. Polygamy is common, and a girl may quite often find her own sister, aunt or niece, among her husband's wives. As compensation she is always chief wife, and, should he be unkind, divorce is obtained simply by leaving him and returning to her parents. Our unwritten law that a widow or widower should allow a decent interval to elapse before re-marriage is enforced among these tribes, the mourner who is in too much hurry to re-enter the marriage state being punished by having his property forcibly taken from him by the outraged relatives of the deceased.

Elopement seems to us the most modern method of settling marriage difficulties, but it is not so in reality, neither is the Gretna Green style a survival of the practice of wife-capture. It is rather a method of advertising to the world that the lovers belong to each other by right of their love, and that neither guardians or parents have any longer jurisdiction over them. This significant form of marriage, so rare here, is practised commonly among Greenlanders,

Caribs, Patagonians, Pueblos, Chippeways, and Creeks. In countries boasting the highest civilisation it is a *sine qua non* that women should be freest in their choice of life partners. Marriage by purchase should belong, by rights, to the Dark Ages as much as marriage by force. Each signifies a low stage of human development—the first when mere physical force was all men acknowledged as sufficient for husbandhood, the second when wealth was so far a sign of ability to keep a wife that the man with the most wives was usually the man with the most wealth, irrespective of physical or other considerations.

Among Mahommedans at the present time four wives are allowed each true believer, but it often happens that a man has to content himself with one because of his poverty. It is a peculiar fact, in connection with these marriage customs of olden times, that the husband was then considered the “worse half.” His position was often precarious. A woman might belong to one man in the morning and in the evening find her husband either slain or captive, and she and his children part of the victor’s spoil. Little of love, such as we know, can have existed then in the marriage state, and marriage, as a divine institution, as taught by the Church, each man being monogamous “the husband of one wife,” practised in however modified a form, must to all thinking people seem the only way for preserving the integrity of the human race.

Before leaving the customs of primitive races it is interesting to notice the many “tabus” which existed in those dark ages. The people whom one might not marry were far more numerous than they are in these more civilised times. The actual ceremony itself was far more complicated.

That mother-in-law joke which has become so stale in comic papers and on the stage, for instance, is even more of a "chestnut" than one might suppose. It can be traced back to the time when the son-in-law had to take his wife by force, and thus incurred the hostility of her mother.

Among some North American Indian tribes to this day it is prohibited for the son-in-law to speak to his wife's parents, and they hold no communication with him. How much mischief made in young married lives by interfering parents-in-law might be avoided in these times if such a sensible rule were followed!

Both among these tribes and the aboriginals of Australasia it was "tabu" to marry except in certain tribes. Inter-marriage among certain relations was forbidden, and after conception and during suckling the wife was "tabu" to her husband for the sake of the child.

Of betrothal rites and marriage ceremonies among the ancients there was no end, and some of these still exist or are conveniently symbolised to suit modern ideas.

Our bride is dressed in white because this is the colour sacred to virgins. She is closely veiled until after the ceremony to symbolise the mysterious nature of marriage, the lifting of the veil by the man and the kiss of ownership being symbolical too. The ring is of gold because that is the most precious metal, it is a circle to show the continuity of love, and plain to symbolise the simplicity and naturalness of the marriage state. The joining of hands is considered a necessary part of the ceremony in every country, east and west, north and south, and from all times the rites have been religious, as though man knew instinctively that real marriage should be, as God ordained, a sacrament.

It is only in modern times that the religious ceremony has not been considered essential. In France the marriage contract was proclaimed a civil one at the Revolution. The Council of Trent announced that marriage was to be considered a sacrament of the Church in 1563, and since that time, in most Christian countries, the religious nature of the rite has been enforced.

The wedding feast is another rite which has come down from the most ancient observances. Man and maid in Christian lands are invited to remember that Our Lord blessed with His presence a simple marriage ceremony in the East, a breakfast where the provisions ran short !

In the very oldest marriage ceremonies the rite took place not in a temple, but before the domestic hearth, and the offerings were made to the Lares and Penates, the home-gods who were worshipped before all other deities.

Fire symbolises life among the Indo-European peoples, and that is why, in some families and countries, the hearth fire is never allowed to die, lest the family become extinct. Originally hearth fires were yearly renewed by fresh fire from the temple of Vesta, the virgin goddess who ensured the purity of marriage.

So beautifully are blended the ideas of Purity and Life, the sanctity of womanhood and of the home ! After the birth of a child in modern India, as in ancient Greece and Rome, the first sacrifice is made to the hearth gods. The child is purified by being carried three times round the fire, and thus admitted to the family circle, symbolised by the sacred hearth-stone. Those advanced thinkers who would do away with home ties and sentiment will thus see that by

violating this Holy of Holies they are seeking to destroy the oldest and most powerful bond in the world. Older than sentiment, more powerful than birth or physical force, is this religion of the hearth, and to try and uproot it is to overturn the very foundations of our social safety and peace. It is in defence of hearth and home that our kith and kin from every corner of the world are fighting now. Let women see to it that as co-priestesses in the cult of the sacred fire, to whom the homes of the world are entrusted, they keep the hearth clean and the fire burning in a spiritual as well as a real sense "till the boys come home!"

In our own country marriage laws and customs are fairly well known, and, on the whole, in keeping with commonsense views.

Like other privileges, though, many of them have had to be passionately fought for, and their coming into use has been obstinately resisted. The calling of banns in churches when first made law was strongly opposed, as also was the Bill passed in 1836 to make civil marriages legal for those who did not desire a religious ceremony.

In the present day American wives seem to have the most freedom, French the most equality, while British yield up a little of each for that vague something known as romance, which seems so desirable and yet so evasive a quality.

Certainly, for domestic efficiency, France bears the palm. The family tie in France is a very strong one, home life a very sacred thing, in spite of the fact that for an unmarried man to keep a mistress is the rule in most classes. So much is this the case that during the great war French law made provision for a man's mistress in the same way that

British military regulations provide for a man's dependants.

Before marriage neither the man nor the girl has much to do with the matrimonial arrangements. The girl is often brought fresh from her convent and perhaps married to an elderly man of the world. That the birth rate in France is in a most unsatisfactory condition is not to be wondered at when these facts are considered. Yet the assured position of legally-married wives, their ability to be a real helpmeet to their husbands, and the general happiness of the whole ménage is one which other countries may envy, and might with advantage imitate.

The whole secret seems to lie in the adaptability of the French wife to whatever circumstances she finds herself in, and to the universality of the marriage "dot" which all French brides bring their husbands, and which adds to the self-respect of the wife, and to freedom from the gnawing anxiety of wondering whether housekeeping money will stretch to pin-money, which beset so many dependent English wives.

Then both husband and wife are trained to domestic life. Reality instead of romance has inspired the union, and this ensures for most French marriages that stability which provides comfort and goes so far towards happiness as well.

French novels and plays, it will be observed, are usually concerned with the afterwards of marriage. They provide the romance which has been conspicuous by its absence beforehand and give a totally false idea of domestic life in modern France.

The marriage ceremony in France is always twofold, legal and religious, and in most cases the whole of the wedding day is kept as a fête by all concerned.

In Spain the reverse of the French rule of the

“dot” obtains. Young people choose for themselves and marry for love, though they are never allowed to be alone until married, and in some parts of the country may not even shake hands, much less kiss!

The custom of decking our brides with orange blossom comes from this country, and the Spaniards adopted it from the Moors.

Portuguese lovers have a very hard time with their courting, and have to contrive to meet in church or to whisper sweet nothings through a grated window. The serenade is indulged in as a means of telling the young woman what her admirer thinks of her, and in Castile a man sends his carriage empty to the house of the girl he wishes to marry. If she rides in it through the public park it is considered equal to an engagement, and preparations for the wedding begin. In Mexico at the ceremony the bride's white veil is pinned to the man's shoulders, so that they are literally as well as symbolically joined. The ceremonies take two days, and it is during the honeymoon which follows that the man first sees his choice alone.

Seeing how mercenary a contract are most marriages on the Continent, it is remarkable that countries like Spain and Italy should be supposed to be the home of romance. Perhaps the elements of reticence and of mystery which surround the movements of the couple are accountable for this, along with the undoubted fact that these Southern lovers are more passionate in love, more sudden in jealousy, than those of Northern climes. In reality, Romance with a capital “R” belongs to the colder countries, where a man may woo and win his bride in manly fashion, caring not so much that she comes to him richly dowered as that she please his taste and reciprocate his love.

In the East wedding customs are intensely reminiscent of ancient days. New ideas spread slowly, and the stories of the Bible times may be seen enacted any day. Not only the wooing and the wedding of a maid happens just as it did in the times of Rachel, of Ruth, and of Rebecca, but in her divorcing, as in the story of Esther, customs have not altered. The most exquisite love poem in the world is that of the Shulamite in the Song of Solomon. Many modern writers go to the Bible for ideas and titles for their work, and this has inspired one of the most romantic.

The wedding ceremonies differ from those in the West considerably, although their main features may be the same. Time is of less account in hot countries, and the wedding feast may be prolonged for days. Honey and sesame, forerunners of our wedding cakes, is always partaken of. In Armenia and Turkey the bride wears red and has cardboard wings with feathers on her head. The ceremonies last for eight days, and the concluding one is for the priest to knock together the heads of the couple, rather a brutal way of ending a sufficiently wearisome rite !

Ceremonies differ, of course, according to the sect of the contracting parties. Betrothal among Jews, as in Germany, is considered part of the actual wedding ceremony, and is binding. It is a far cry from Yiddish Jewesses in the East End of London to brides in the Caucasus, yet both have the custom of shaving the head after marriage, the former wearing a wig to conceal their deficiency and the latter the platoke, or turban.

Among Syrian Christians who belong to the Coptic Church the bride has to sit for hours in her bridal dress, not even opening her eyes, but among non-Christians in Oriental countries the bride has a

much less trying time during the ceremony, whatever hardships she may endure after. Luxurious bathing, feasting, coaxing, all take their part in the rites, and the bridegroom makes himself beautiful by having his hair and nails stained. Neither must he display undue haste to get possession of his bride, although she is considered exclusively his property, to till his ground, prepare his food, bear and rear his children. An unmarried woman is unknown in the East, where plurality of wives is allowed. This seeming hardship is not so in reality, as the oldest wife is always considered the chief, the younger having to wait on her and obey her word absolutely. Divorce is not easy, yet it may be obtained, and the woman always takes away the amount of the dowry when it is she who wishes to go. Unfaithfulness in wives is punished by death, the husband taking the law into his own hands. The status of the married woman in the East is a lower one than that of her sister in the West, and hitherto she has been apparently contented that it should be so. It is only comparatively so, however. She is absolute mistress in the home, and that, though a narrow, is an important sphere. With the spread of education, however, signs are not wanting in Egypt, in India, and even in Turkey, that she will not always be so contented. Already women are not so closely confined or so mysteriously veiled as they were, and their exclusion from public life cannot continue. Many Indian women have come to England to get their medical degrees, and return to their own country to give the Zenana women the help and advice they so sorely need. American Missions are doing a wonderful educational work in Egypt, and even in the Sudan among girls of the better classes, who return to the close confinement of the harem with less and less

willingness. I have read some charming novels and poems written by Turkish women, who are cultured, intelligent, beautiful, and capable of doing as useful work in the world as their sisters in the West who have freedom and education.

In general her training has made the woman of the East sweet, docile and domesticated. Her lord in name is her lord in reality. She is supposed to have no soul, so that equality between them is impossible. But if he have the onus of providing for his womenfolk without their lifting a finger to help he has also the honour of absolute sovereignty, and the comfort of a slavish observance of his well-being and of that of his children.

The Eastern woman's efficiency in her own home is undisputed, and while not for an instant arguing that her position is at all an enviable one, one cannot help thinking at times that in this, as in other Western lands, woman, like the dog in the fable, too often grasps at the shadow of equality and loses the substance of true happiness.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN TO MARRY.

“There is a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing.”—*Ecclesiastes*.

“All times are good to seek your wedded home,
Bringing a mutual delight.”—*George Eliot*.

To fall in love is natural—to fall into matrimony criminal. In this short sentence is crammed the whole philosophy of timely marriage.

By timely marriage we mean marriage when the human beings contracting the alliance are physically most perfect. Indeed, the physiological timeliness of marriage is really the only aspect of so purely physical a contract as marriage should be, which need be considered here.

The question of whether a man can afford to marry is one which, though often debated, will never be settled by one person for another, either in this book or elsewhere.

Prudence is seldom listened to when passion has the bit between its teeth. Many a marriage consummated in the face of all worldly wisdom has justified itself. The man has found that he has drawn a prize in Love's lottery. A wise and loving partner will really halve a man's sorrows and double his joys. The man who wins such a wife will find that it is indeed cheaper for two to live than one, and pessimists who come to croak “I told you so” remain to sing “Who could have believed it?” and possibly rise up and do likewise.

There is real and grave danger, though, in such

an important physical change as marriage entails, being undertaken before either of the parties are ripe for matrimony. Boy and girl marriages too often mean race suicide. Doctors are unanimous in their verdict here. A woman is seldom fit for the sheer physical burden of marriage until she is twenty-five. Before that time the reproductive organs are immature, and many of the bones of the body are not full grown or ossified. A woman who marries much before this age has not only missed many of the legitimate joys and the dear freedom of girlhood, she runs serious risk of injuring her own health permanently, and of bringing into the world a child who will, if it live, be unfit, and in its turn beget children who are unfit.

Just as there is no more beautiful sight in life than a young mother with her first child, so there is none sadder than that of the girl-mother burdened with responsibilities she does not understand, bowed down by cares she cannot cope with.

“ I was a mother before I was a girl ” is a grave charge for a wife to bring against her husband—against the laws of a land which permits such injustice—against parents, whose care should have been not to “ marry their girls off,” but to train them to wait for maturity before undertaking tasks for which both body and mind are unfit.

In the same way a boy is not a man physically, whatever he may be legally, before he is twenty-five, and among those ancient nations which, according to Plato and Aristotle, would not permit marriage of their males before twenty-eight to thirty years, the population attained a higher degree of physical perfection than any nation known to ancient or modern times.

Heredity plays so great a part in human progress that immature marriages must spell unfitness. If it is

true that the boy is father to the man, it is equally true that the boy-father begets a boy-son, and such a son will be cursed with the stamp of immaturity, both of physique and character, as long as he lives.

A word as to the "war wedding." While this work is still in circulation it is happily possible that the war may be a nightmare of the past, but the results of the war, both on the national death rate and the national birth rate, will be long with us. Over the former we have, unfortunately, no control. Death the harvester is reaping where he has not sown, and there is scarcely a home in this fruitful land of ours which will not have contributed its fair sheaf to that dread gathering. God help the mothers and wives and sweethearts to give willingly, remembering that "they that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

But it is with the war's influence on the national birth rate we are concerned here. The question is too large a one to be dealt with fully, but so much romantic nonsense has been talked about war babies and war weddings one feels that a word of advice would not be out of place.

First, then, as to the war babies, which, alas! sometimes precede the war wedding. An ounce of fact, here, however, is worth a pound of fancy. Official statistics of the birth rate of illegitimate children born after the first year of the war prove that these were not in excess of those born in previous years. So much for the gross exaggeration of certain well-meaning scandalmongers who were all too ready to cry shame on our New Army. Of the spread of immorality among men who are temporarily severed from home ties and conveniences it is easy to believe the worst. Undoubtedly not only in our big cities, but in country places where monotony

offers every excuse, facilities for immorality are vastly increased by the war. In the cities it is a thing which is pursued quite openly. Some hotels are notorious for the "week-end" partners they cater for—others wink at it, but do not close their doors to the women who flaunt new wedding rings, the men who have temporarily forgotten the allegiance they owe to the old. One of the most heartrending aspects of a war, quite terrible enough in the legitimate sorrow it brings, is this, that the best thing that could happen to some of our bravest men is for an enemy bullet to get them out of the muddle they have made of their own lives. Over such, perhaps inevitable, results one can only draw a veil. Better by far the hastiest war wedding, so long as its privileges are realised, its responsibilities not evaded.

But—and here perhaps our girls are responsible for much of the misery which will inevitably result from a marriage consummated without due preparation—the lure of the khaki has been too much for many girls. Quite ordinary civilian friends have blossomed suddenly into potential heroes—to be sympathised with—and spoiled—and their wishes granted in case they never return.

In many cases they will not return, and the young wife will nurse the illusion along with her baby—which is no illusion—that her life's happiness is buried in France or Flanders. In many more cases the hastily-accepted partner will return, only to find that it was all a mistake. Perhaps he is wounded—lost an eye or a limb—and, torn as the loving wife's heart will be with sympathy, she will not be able to conceal from herself as time goes on that she acted on impulse in marrying while the glamour of war surrounded her lover. Time is kind, but it is also inexorably cruel.

He will show if the love is such as can outlast "sickness or death"—"better or worse."

Better—far better—keep Time on your side by postponing the marriage, and using restraint and self-respect as your allies during the engagement. If your lover comes back to you maimed, marry him then—comfort him and work for him, if necessary. Let marriage be his reward—his D.C.M. given for the manly restraint he has imposed on his appetites—the faithfulness with which he has borne the separation.

"But I want to give him something to fight for," one girl exclaims. She may be right. In cases where a long engagement has preceded the "war wedding," let it take place by all means. In those where the engagement was an impulse, "he" will fight better, do his duty with less care for results, if he is not handicapped by knowing that an anxious wife or expectant mother is sickeningly asking herself "Did I do right in marrying him in such a hurry?" "Shall I love him if he comes back, wounded and unfit to support me as he should?" No, terrible as must be the shock to the brave man who has risked his all on the field of honour to come back and find the woman he loves shrink from his physical disabilities, it is a shock which can be borne from a fiancée. For a young husband to find out too late that "her" love is not of the stuff that lasts there are two courses open—dissipation with dishonour or death with honour. Happiness is ended for him, either way.

Therefore, girls, be careful that sentiment and romance do not lead to a war wedding, which you will both regret to your dying day. Men, think twice. Better love her and leave her and live to love another day than filch from the future love which should outlast life itself.

“ I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more.”

In age, therefore, the “ when ” of marriage is all essential. Nor is it wise even to be engaged too young. Long engagements are a weariness to the flesh and a drain on the resources of the bridegroom-to-be. They waste money which might be employed by the man in providing the future home. No man likes to appear stingy to his sweetheart. A long course of chocolate buying and theatre-going wastes money as well as health. Too much indulgence of sentiment—solitary spooning—fervours and fevers of love and jealousy—waste energy which will be required when the real thing comes along.

It is easy to tell, among the couples one knows, those who began too young. There is a staleness in their love-making which forbodes satiety before the honeymoon arrives. There are no surprises left in each other's character—nothing to find out. To vary the monotony of a long engagement the girl is often led to force a quarrel. The “ making up ” time, she hopes, will induce an ardour in his courtship to which she has long been a stranger. He gets “ slack ” in his treatment of her. Man is too apt to undervalue what he is sure of. He is a hunter by instinct, and she is a wise girl who will keep him so uncertain of the result of the chase as to ensure capture in the long run.

Too often such an engagement is not “ linked sweetness long drawn out,” but linked staleness of which one tires. Then comes the crash of a broken engagement. The couple, whom all their friends are so used to coupling that they might almost as well be married, find themselves the centre of interest again, but for what an ignominious reason. They

have parted. Her friends guess "he grew tired"—his friends are certain. And they are probably right. Very, very seldom is it the woman who breaks a long engagement. Hoping against hope, she lets things drag on, overlooks little neglects, forgives little unkindnesses, until the "little rift" widens, and the music, which should have been the wedding march, is mute for her. The girl engaged at 17 and unmarried at 27 might as well send him back his presents. It is a very weak or a very unfortunate man who cannot, in ten years, make a home for the woman he really wants. How much better for both to have waited—free from restraints and, perhaps, sampling other types—until she was 23. Then a brief, bright courtship of two years—quite long enough for getting to know a great deal about each other—not long enough for getting to know "all"—ends in blissful union. Body fit, mind fresh, they are ready to investigate together those mysteries of matrimony which await them.

There is a type of laggard lover who, instead of beginning too early, and being forced into immature or stale matrimony, begins right, but hesitates too long about taking the fatal plunge.

This is a type which is becoming more and more common, especially in our suburbs and large cities. In the country, for various reasons, long courtships are not the rule. In fact, the reverse is the case, and the "marry-in-haste" wedding more often takes place. There is something about the beauty and the loneliness of country life which suggests mating, even to the most phlegmatic. Nature is seen at her work here. Spring, when the birds meet—summer, when they mate—provide object-lessons in domesticity which the young of both sexes are apt to learn. There is a

simplicity and naturalness about the whole business which is charming. Happy indeed should be the young man who can woo the woman of his choice “far from the madding crowd,” and though in the country unwise and immature marriages are as likely to take place as in towns, the results of such unions are somehow not so disastrous.

In towns there is an unholy excitement about love which, while it may lead to illicit indulgence, as often leads to unnatural delay in consummating engagements. The selfishness of comfortably-placed single men in our towns and suburbs is a real menace to the well-being of the country. It leads, in the first place, directly to immorality. The racial instincts of a healthy young man cannot with impunity be denied.

A great deal of nonsense is written and believed about this question. The facts are perfectly plain, and should be faced without hypocrisy or cowardice. So long as young men do not marry it will be impossible to stamp out the white slave traffic. So long as married women evade their duty as wives the number of unmarried wives will be kept up. Legislation may do much to stamp out apparent immorality. Common sense and an informed conscience could do more. I will treat of this matter more fully in Chapter VI., but this point must be made plain: unnatural abstinence from the use of a faculty as divine as any other—that of procreation—leads to deceit, immorality, misery and death, and one of the most prolific causes of this state of things is, we believe, single selfishness. Men are the chief offenders here, although there are not wanting signs in the revolt of women, that evasion of the duty of motherhood will soon be as rife among them as that of legitimate fatherhood among men. The age at which

men of the middle classes marry is gradually rising. It is no uncommon sight now—but it is none the less a very sad one—to see a man between 40 and 50 engrossed with his first child of two. Honourable reasons there may be, and often are, why marriage has been delayed until this age. Parents have their claims, but “Be fruitful and multiply” was God’s first commandment to man—given even before “Honour thy father and thy mother”—and to selfish parents who would postpone happiness for their children which they themselves have enjoyed God spoke once for all when He said, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife.”

As the results of too early marriages are seen in immature children, so those of unduly delayed matrimony are usually all too evident. Old-looking, weazened, too mature children, or those who have scarcely enough vitality to support life, are the offspring of those who marry too late. They are “degenerate” in every way. With physical powers too little developed, mentally, they are often unbearably precocious, and morally, sexual powers are unnaturally mature.

The woman who has waited too long for her crowning joy—motherhood—often runs grave danger in undertaking the duties of childbirth too late in life. Doctors know such cases too well. Even should conception and gestation be normal, “labour and sorrow” to an unnatural degree attend the woman who has her first child when the organs are too matured.

The happy mean is attained when parents and children grow old together. They are a family of comrades, and, granted that true temperance has been

observed in marriage relations, so that the mother is not unfairly burdened with the cares of motherhood, work and play are shared and enjoyed by all.

The too mature father and mother often cannot be bothered to share their children's pleasures. Before these are old enough to be "off hand," both mother and father are undergoing such changes in physique as make healthy exertion and recreation a worry and weariness. Long before this state occurs, if the marriage has been undertaken at a proper time and its responsibilities not evaded too long, the older children should have become real comforts to the tired mother and comrades to the father. A man must have a little of the boy left in him still to be all to his little son which he demands of "daddy." A woman must not have left girlhood too far behind to remember and sympathise with her little daughter—

" Standing with reluctant feet

Where the brook and river meet."

Such a couple will have no acquired skin of the selfish habits of singleness painfully to slough when they start life together. "Crusty old bachelors" and "selfish old maids" do not change miraculously into unselfish married couples by the reading over them of a few words of Scripture. None but those who undertake to live together "according to God's ordinance, until death us do part" know how essential to happiness in that state real unselfishness is, and it is not wisdom to remain single until solitary habits are formed which make unselfishness almost impossible.

No, the time to marry is, undoubtedly, neither too young or too old, but in that golden mean when the habits are adaptable—ideals still active—the generating organs ready and waiting for that perfect union which makes humanity divine.

CHAPTER IV.

WHOM TO MARRY.

"A perfect woman, nobly planned."

"O manhood, balanced, florid, full."

Walt Whitman.

"For contemplation he, and valour formed

For softness she, and sweet attractive grace."

Milton.

ACTING on *Punch's* advice, "To those about to marry—don't," we must begin here by saying that we shall only find whom to marry when we consider fully whom *not* to marry.

The subject of the "tabu" as practised among primitive peoples has been dealt with in a previous chapter. It is not necessary again to refer to it, except to notice that the "tabu" of these so-called uncivilised nations is in almost all cases upheld by modern scientists. This is a noteworthy addition to that poetical fancy which may become scientific fact. There is "A divinity which shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will."

Man was born for progress. The seeds of the divine have been in him from the earliest infancy of the race. From evolution through revolution he will accomplish his destiny, which is ultimate perfection, as Our Father is perfect.

Consanguinity is the most important of these "tabus." The history of the aristocracy of all countries—and of royalty, kept too rigidly select—goes to prove inter-marriage between those too nearly related is bad for the race. Native races who inter-marry too frequently die out. Defects of mind or

body, it is reasonable to believe, are perpetuated more surely if two affected persons marry than if one healthy and one unhealthy person do so. Even here it would be better—though perhaps a counsel of perfection—to advise that only healthy persons should marry.

For those who argue that health is not everything, but that character is much, there is a good deal to be said, however. Doctors and scientists are by no means agreed on this point. While it is true, broadly speaking, that the insane, the epileptic, and especially those afflicted with any disease of the generative organs should be prohibited from marriage, observation goes to show that there are such differences in abnormal people of both sexes that no hard-and-fast rule can be laid down. Extremely nervous, sensitive, or “nervy” people should not marry—some doctors say—yet the artistic temperament is one that the world could ill do without, and to it belong the ultra-sensitive and nervous of both sexes. Beauty is Nature’s normal aspect, but the ability to see that beauty, and to reproduce it to ear or sight or sense, indicates an excess of normal qualities. If only the bovine, phlegmatic, ordinary people are to multiply, what a dull place this world will become. Everyone will be healthy, perhaps. There will be none of that soul-language which we call music—none of that emotionalism which produces poetry—none of that colour-madness which paints pictures. But—and this is a great point—there will be that deadly dulness which produces religious hysteria, and that hatred of monotony which prompts man to persecution of all which does not fall into line with his own limited notions of what is right and proper.

No, once the broad principle of one's duty to posterity is grasped—not to bring immature children into the world, not to evade parenthood or to encourage thriftlessness by irresponsible reproduction, not to marry at all if inherited diseases are likely to be transmitted—it is unwise to dwell too much on what may happen. Perfect mental and moral affinity goes far to balance physical defects, *so long as these are not known to be transmittable*. Any honest doctor will tell doubtful lovers the truth on these points. Where the weakness has been acquired by the persons themselves, doctor's advice is not necessary, though. For an impure man to marry a pure woman is criminal. It is a crime against God, whose image he bears, and humanity, whose image he propagates. For a woman to marry, well knowing that, through illness or wrong doing, the reproductive organs are diseased or missing, is equally criminal. Such lack of candour is a crime against man, who should be her god if he is worthy, and against God who ordained the holy bonds of matrimony for the procreation of children.

Another rigid "tabu" which should be enforced by law is this : May should not wed December. "The people of Orinoco," an old writer tells us, "consider the marriage of youth to age desirable. But they are bad philosophers and worse physiologists. They unite old men and girls, young men and old women, that age may correct the petulance of youth, for, they say, to join young persons equal in youth and imprudence in wedlock is to unite one fool to another."

Even so, these marriages are not intended to last. They are "trial marriages." What shall we say of the foolishness of a nation which allows mar-

riages between age and youth to last? Such a nation is wilfully blind, and if it were not in this case, as in so many others, that the sins of the fathers are visited on the innocent children, we should say such a nation deserved all it received in the way of falling birth rate, infant mortality, adult immorality, and the like. For an old man to marry a young girl is not only unnatural, it should be, and often is, utterly repugnant to the poor girl who is forced to make such an alliance. Even should there be no physical repugnance on the part of the girl to an old man's amorous advances, the natural, healthy functions of youth require an equal return if they are to satisfy and not exhaust. It is the exception if conception follows a union between those of wide disparity of age, and this alone, when we remember what marriage was instituted for, should lead public opinion to condemn the union of May and December.

When the woman is much the older—that is, when she marries a young man after the time when she might naturally expect to bear children—the fact that such a union is often made because “she has money,” though it may be a reason, is no excuse. If her husband remain faithful, which does not often happen, she is acting unpatriotically in depriving the country of one of its legitimate means of increase. Only domestic misery and national poverty can follow where it is widely allowed that age may marry youth uncondemned.

Of course, these remarks do not apply to the many and often happy marriages which take place between persons of mature years who, from one reason or another, contract the marriage tie solely for companionship or convenience. Such marriages do occur, especially in highly-civilised countries, and are

capable of ensuring a high level of comfort and happiness for the parties concerned. A home is made where none might have been, and home life is an asset to every country.

Only, every such marriage should be preceded by perfect candour on both sides. If a man only wants a housekeeper or a nurse, he should say so. If a woman only wants comradeship or a home, she should say so. Conceivably no more unhappy state of things could be found than either man or woman longing for the full marital relationship and tied for life to a partner who is incapable or unwilling to satisfy such legitimate desire.

A little different in cause, though the same in effect, as disparity of age in marriage, is that of difference in temperament. This should have been discovered before the tie was formed, and should provide ground for divorce if there was any wilful deceit in the matter. It may be called the mating of January with July. Perhaps it is the man who is immersed in business or who lives only for his profession, and who neglects to take advantage of those privileges which a loving woman is so willing to allow. Or it is the woman, who, through temperamental coldness, or cowardice as to the possible result, looks on the man's indulgence in natural propensities as animalish, or lacking self-control. On whichever side it is, such disparity of temperament is enough to wreck married happiness, and is a fruitful cause of unchastity, and even of divorce in some cases. A man, if he is not blinded by his own passion, should be able to detect the danger to his future happiness before he is irrevocably pledged. Even should he be engaged, a broken engagement is better than a violated or cold hearthstone. A woman who has the natural

desire that her union should be crowned with success should draw back in time if she finds that her husband-to-be is too engrossed in himself or his own pursuits to give some indication that it is real love, as well as respect, which he feels for her. Passion can be held in check—it can never be forced—and July should never mate with January if real happiness is desired.

It seems almost incredible that, in this age of enlightenment, marrying people should be warned to be careful in selecting their partner for life. We manage these things better for animals than for our own kind. Immense care is taken in the pairing of birds, cats, dogs, horses, to get the breed pure and healthy, and though it is naturally repugnant to a refined woman to feel she is selected merely for her reproductive qualities, yet it is true that physical fitness is as necessary to a happy union as mental and moral. There is nothing that is so likely to wreck married happiness as continual illness in either partner. We speak instinctively of a man “tied to an ailing wife,” and the phrase is significant. No woman can guard against accidental illness, and it is not possible to tell how marriage may suit beforehand. Some apparently frail and delicate women bear children with ease and are the better for fulfilling the natural functions, while some robust, big women have puny, ailing children who are always in trouble. No rule can be given, or could be followed. Each eye makes its own beauty, which is fortunate, but as a general thing, similarity of mental, dissimilarity of physical attributes, should be sought for. Tall and short should mate, fair and dark, thin and stout, and so wonderfully is Nature right in instinct if left alone, these often do.

But it is tragic for the man of thoughtful inclina-

tion—studious, home-loving—to marry a vain, frivolous, gaiety-loving woman. Yet this and its opposite are often seen. The lure of the eye is all that is considered, reason being kept out of the question altogether in this most important decision. A man becomes “infatuated” with a woman just because she is his opposite—gay, bright, irresponsible. If there is any reasoning with such a one, let me urge him now, before tying himself for life to a partner who will always be pulling in the opposite direction to what he wants to go, to “wait and see.” Go and see the woman at home. You have met her, perhaps, at the seaside, perhaps at a dance. She is “pretty to walk with, witty to talk with.” Don’t let glamour confuse the issue. You want that woman to be a good home-maker, not a graceful dancer. You want her to be a good wife to you, not a woman whom all men turn to look at. You want her to be the mother of your children, not a dress-stand for the latest fashion. Perhaps she is already a worker. She belongs to that immense class of women—all honour to them—who have gone out into the world on an equality with their brothers and are economically independent. She may long intensely for the narrower and yet important sphere of home. If she does, her training, her grasp of detail, her care and accuracy in business will help her immensely to be as successful in the home as in the workshop. Don’t be doubtful here. Other things being equal, the good business girl is more likely to be the good housewife than the idle, or slatternly, or untrained home-bird. On the other hand, independence may have spoiled her for the comparative dependence of domestic life. Find out her ideas on the great money question. Money is the rock on which more matrimonial barques are wrecked

than any other. Does she expect to spend as much on dress and pleasure after marriage as before? In ninety-eight cases out of a hundred she does, and in ninety-nine cases it can't be done.

Among modern business girls who marry business men there are comparatively few who will have as much "to do with" when they have given up their own income, however generous the man may be. Be quite explicit on this point, and, if possible, give her a separate dress allowance.

"I hate asking Fred for every penny I want," an otherwise happily-married girl said to the writer recently. "Is it not degrading? He would have to pay a housekeeper a salary. Surely I am worth more to him than a housekeeper."

She voiced there one of the problems of domestic life. Many a business girl has given up a good income to marry the man of her heart only to find that by so doing she has reduced herself to absolute beggary. Some men like to feel that their women are dependent on them. "She gets food and lodging, and her trousseau isn't worn out yet," I heard a Scotchman say once. "What more does she want?"

Such a man does not deserve an enlightened, intelligent girl for a wife. He belongs to the East, and to the Middle Ages there, and any girl who finds her fiancé voicing such sentiments is justified in declining the honour of becoming his slave.

No, when you are wooing a girl, tell her frankly what you will be able to afford in the way of private income for herself, and then keep honourably to your part of the contract once you are wed.

Children—or not—is another fruitful cause of unhappiness in married life. Some women are family shy. So are some men. An engaged couple, if there

is real friendship between them, and not only the glamour of sexual instinct, should be able to talk freely on this subject.

“ I’m ‘ so ’ again,” a little woman said to the writer wistfully the other day. “ I don’t mind, but my husband *will* be angry.”

Why? in heaven’s name. A man is less than a man if he cannot stand by the results of his own acts, a woman less than a woman who is not willing to bear the pains as well as the privileges of matrimony. To hear some married people talk, one would think that children were a deplorable accident of Nature, instead of the gift of a Creator.

It is essential to your future happiness, men, and to yours, engaged girls, to find out without any foolish prudery what each thinks on this question.

Race suicide is sin. You are the potential parents of a child at the earliest stage of conception, and to kill that child is murder. Yet unthinking or ignorant men will often counsel their wives to “ do something ” to avoid the natural consequence of marriage. Frivolous or cowardly or lazy girls will risk life itself to evade the responsibilities of motherhood.

Doctors should have the courage of their opinions in these cases. Men and women selecting their partners for life should make sure that they are in complete sympathy on this question. Of course, it will be argued that deliberate selection is scarcely ever made in this department. Men and women “ fall in love ” by instinct. This is true in some cases, though even in these accident has less to do with the result than some people imagine. “ Opportunity ” is a great thing, and it only needs propinquity to the opposite sex for some natures to be everlastingly falling in love.

But, granted that one cannot choose whom one will love, one can always decide “whom one will marry.” Reason can, and should be, brought into play always before marriage, lest remorse have too much to say after.

A woman should be not your plaything, but your playmate, not your slave, but your companion, not your echo, but your inspiration. Playmate, thought-mate, work-mate, *bon camarade* in every department of life. This is the kind of partner to choose, and, when chosen, to stand by. This is the union which “age will not stale, nor custom wither,” and the only sort of marriage contract which should be entered into by thinking men and women.

CHAPTER V.

THE MATING TIME.

“In the spring, a young man’s fancy
Lightly turns to thoughts of love.
Shakespeare.”

“My faith is fast
That all the loveliness I sing
Is made to bear the mortal blast,
And blossom in a better spring.”
Coventry Patmore.

THE mating time for nature is undoubtedly the spring. Poets and novelists alike unite in hailing spring as the time when love is born, but though the spring, with its freshness, its sense of new life, its instinctive yearnings for companionship, may be a time to love, it is rarely a time to marry, if common sense be consulted, and not sentiment alone.

Religion and popular ideas on spring weddings are united here. The Church does not favour weddings in Lent, and by the early discipline of the Church marriages were forbidden in Advent and Whitsuntide also. Lent is a time for fasting, and not for feasting, and though in some countries on the Continent the “Mi-carême” or Mid-Lent season is seized by couples anxious to marry, many brides prefer to postpone any thought of the new life, with its new clothes and new cares, until the season fixed by religious sentiment for self-denial is over.

Then May, the most beautiful month in the spring calendar, has been universally banned as an “unlucky” month for weddings. Why this should

be so it is hard to say. It is perhaps because of the prejudice against May weddings which has come down to us from prehistoric times. With the ancients May weddings were "tabu" in many tribes. In ancient Rome they were absolutely forbidden, because the old Roman festivals of the Goddess of Chastity and the Feast of the Dead were held in this month, and these were inimical to marriage. In modern Greece every month is lucky except May, and the wedding must be at the time of the full moon. Death or misfortune is sure to follow within the year of a May marriage, and children born of such a marriage are bound to be sickly. "Marry in May, Rue for aye" is an old proverb.

There is usually some reasonable and common-sense idea behind these old proverbs, and probably that which gave rise to the prejudice against May marriages, apart from the prohibition of old custom, is the fact that babies born from May weddings would begin life in February, a most inclement month for babies in this country, at least.

Few young wives look forward, perhaps, to having their first baby in the first year of married life, but it does sometimes happen, and for this reason autumn, or at any rate late summer weddings, would appear to be more convenient than spring matings.

Babies born in the warm weather have more chance than those born in winter or late autumn. They can be carried out oftener, and by the time the cold weather makes a certain amount of coddling imperative their organs are more matured. Then, in the middle classes at least, holidays occur more frequently in the autumn than in the spring. The annual week or fortnight is convenient for the honeymoon, and though it is fashionable to curtail this time and

even to do without it altogether, if it can prudently be indulged in it certainly should.

As to where the honeymoon should be spent, opinions are divided. Some couples—of the romantic order—favour a lonely spot on the coast or in the mountains—the lonelier the better. Others make of the honeymoon period a wild rush of excitement. This is going to the other extreme, and is much to be deplored. There is quite enough that is “new” in the relationship of the couple, and though some brides there are who stipulate that the marriage shall not be consummated until after the honeymoon, they are very few, and fewer still are the bridegrooms who could exercise restraint for so long after the woman he loves is legally his own.

New experiences, new sights, new friendships, all combine in the “gay” honeymoon to exhaust vitality, and the young couple are likely to return to the humdrum duties of everyday life little fitted to enter into them.

Besides, the fashionable wedding has contributed its quota of weariness to the bride-to-be before the fresh call is made on her strength, and this all points to the fact that the honeymoon, be it long or short, should be spent in quietly getting to know each other in the new and exciting relationship in which they find themselves.

It is very little use, perhaps, to inveigh here against the aforementioned fashionable wedding. The rich are not the only transgressors in this respect. All classes make of a wedding a severe tax on purse and patience, so that what should be pure happiness, both in anticipation and realisation, more often than not comes to be a “weariness of the flesh” to all concerned.

Happy the man who finds his bride to be ready and willing after due preparation in courtship, and sane consideration of every probability which marriage entails, to go quietly either to church or registrar, attended only by immediate relatives, to partake together of the quiet, homely meal which shall fortify against the wedding journey, and then to travel to some naturally beautiful and restful spot and there begin together that longer journey in double harness which is to last “until death do them part.”

This, however, though desirable, is often utterly unattainable. A man must make the best of the bad job he feels too affectionate and exacting friends have made of what should have been an entirely personal matter. When the wedding is over and his real mating time begins, then is the opportunity for him to show what he is made of, and whether she has made the greatest mistake or the greatest bargain of her life.

Then is the time for her to begin to show that her heart is not entirely set on clothes, cakes, and company. The honeymoon should be a picture in little of what the whole after life together is to be. Some disappointments are, perhaps, inevitable; they should be, and generally are, far outweighed by the realisation that life holds for “they twain” far more of rapture than they could have realised apart. If the husband is considerate, if the wife is loving and anxious to please, yielding “rights” which he will not have to demand, the honeymoon, be it long or short, should be a time of “joy without alloy” for both.

Supposing, then, that the wedding has been an autumn one, the ordinary annual holiday glorified into a honeymoon, and the young couple returned, refreshed in mind and body, are beginning the new life together. What opportunities for fireside chats and confidences

the winter will allow ! What expectations will come with the spring should their love be blessed with its natural result ! Now is the time to find if the perfect lover can stand at the bar of Hymen and still keep his perfection. Now is the time to learn if the sweetness which lured will keep, during the heat of intimacy and the long days of reaction, its power to sweeten life as it should.

The exact date of the marriage should, of course, have been determined by the bride. Her own personal calendar will have fixed this. There are a few women who come to such an important physical change as marriage implies, totally unprepared for what they are to encounter at that time, and who therefore are liable to such mental shock as may even turn their love to loathing. Few men like to feel that the women they are to marry know too much, yet few would care to marry a girl who is completely ignorant of what marriage means.

Mothers are much to blame in this respect. Girls should be taught what married life is, and what it may lead to. There would be fewer cases of young girls led unwittingly into immorality if mothers and teachers did their duty in this respect.

Where complete ignorance exists, care and consideration on the part of the bridegroom are all the more necessary, but—and this is a point on which it is to be feared many couples, loving each other intensely, are apt to go so far wrong as to cause serious illness to the wife and such a drain on the husband's physical strength as will unfit him for a return to ordinary life and work—love is never lust.

We shall understand better what the attitude of the newly-married couple should be to this question if we consider for a moment what love between man

and woman is, what it should be, and what it is capable of becoming.

In the first place, we must remember that love is not only attraction, nor admiration. Deep in the bosom of man and woman, implanted there by Nature at God's order, is the kind of affection, unexplained and unexplainable, but which implies possession of the object loved. A man not only wants a woman, he wants a particular woman to be his wife; and this not only because he is attracted by her personality or admires her person, but because there is something in that one which he feels will satisfy his unexpressed longing. The same is true of the love of a woman for a man. Love, even the highest love between the sexes, is based on this law of Nature, but though desire may be the foundation of married life, it is not the edifice. Built up on this love, and compacted of mutual esteem, cemented with friendship, the fair and noble building called a home is to rise.

It follows then that wise control and thoughtful consideration should mark always the attitude of the young married couple. There can be no respect where there is no restraint, and no friendship without respect.

It is the wife's place to mark the boundaries of their marital relations, and, provided that she truly loves her husband and appreciates to the full the duties as well as the privileges of her position as wife, he will be ready to bow to her decision in such matters.

Scientists and medical men are one on the point that temperance in married life is the only way for health. The woman who loves her husband must be wise for him, as well as considerate of her own health in this respect. Only by making rules bred of experience in this matter, and keeping to them, will they

realise how immeasurably more fit they are together to meet the difficulties of married life, and to make matrimony yield to them all that it should of inspiration, help, and blessing.

The wife is to be the "helpmeet" of the husband, the husband is to "cherish" the wife. In these two words their respective obligations and privileges are exactly defined. His, as the stronger, to care for and consider, not allowing passion to make him forget, ever, that he is the stronger. Hers, as the weaker, to help him meetly in every need of his nature—physical, mental, and spiritual.

It is usual to write these words in this order, but no good wife forgets that her highest function is to cater for his spiritual needs, however apparent the physical may be. In this way she will minister to all three.

God giveth increase. Never forget that marital relations may entail the responsibility of parenthood, and while not evading this, so act that your union may be divinely blessed.

On the score of health there is much to be said for the idea of separate beds for husband and wife, should separate bedrooms be impossible.

During these first days and weeks together there is a tendency, perhaps, in the ardour of love, for the young couple to be utterly frank with each other. The marriage veil has been lifted, each one now knows the other, there is a danger there will be no reserves left, and without reticence there can be no real respect.

Mental frankness about matrimonial obligations is highly necessary, both before and after marriage, but this should never degenerate into licence. How often do we hear tales from young girls' lips which we know can only have come from the smoke-room

and which have travelled to the drawing-room *via* the married sister of such young girl? A man might tell such tales to the chance-met woman should he unfortunately be one of those who frequent such society; he should never be able to tell them to his wife. Every woman knows the difference here between honour and humour. There are some stories which, even if not suited for the young person, are so irresistibly humorous they must be repeated. The dishonourable ones are those which hold up to ridicule the marriage relation, lend a double meaning to the most innocent expressions and sayings, or sully that which should be sacred, the reputation of any of her own sex whom she does not know, and therefore should not judge.

To be without humour is a terrific drawback to any human being. A man without humour is a burden, a woman without the saving grace is a waste. Laugh at everything you can. No man is any the worse for being laughed at occasionally, and children who have never in their lives been laughed at are likely to have a hard time when they leave such a too solemn home circle. But be sure you always laugh with honour, and let not your sense of humour blind you to every other consideration.

Some couples treat each other with dreadful familiarity, especially in company. They seize the opportunity of friends being present to "get at each other." Unless the discussion is to degenerate into a quarrel, the "got at" does not always retaliate, but how surely such excessive frankness about each other's peculiarities and failings is likely to prove that "little rift within the lute which by-and-bye shall make the music mute!" When first two people of differing temperaments come together there is very apt to be a little friction. Rubbing down the domestic

machinery with the sandpaper of humour is, as we have said, one of the ways to make the works go smoothly. What can't be cured can often be laughed at, and in this way little jars are avoided.

The oil of forbearance is also another useful adjunct. It is difficult to keep one's temper when the bacon is burned, or the coffee cold, or when "he" loses his train home and the dinner is spoiled. A good plan in these cases is to try not to keep one's own temper, but to keep each other's. Reckon that his temper is in your keeping, little wife, and that, if you don't give him cause for losing it, it won't be lost. Reckon that hers is in your keeping, young husband, and if you don't find fault she won't answer back. It is a fresh idea and a good one. Try it.

There is a tendency among young married people to test each other's constancy by "flirting" in fun, and just to show how much each trusts the other, with any charming girl or nice man who comes to visit or whom they meet out.

"Oh, I trust my wife!" I overheard a young fellow say at a dance as he stood in the doorway and watched his pretty partner languishing through a waltz in his best friend's arms. From the gloomy watchfulness of his eyes and the ceaseless attention he paid to the ends of a long-suffering moustache I had my own opinion as to how much that trust was costing him.

"Yes," said his wife airily later, "this is my husband's dance, but he disappeared into the conservatory some time ago with May" (her chief bridesmaid) "and he hasn't returned yet. I told him not to hurry—I can trust Ted," and she resumed her anxious watching of the curtained doorway leading to the conservatory and to those dim, secluded nooks

she knew so well. She had just sampled them herself, and understood their possibilities, you see!

“When we married,” she went on confidentially, “we made up our minds not to have any silly jealousy. He can have a good time and so shall I,” and her foot tapped the ground impatiently, to mark the good time which had begun.

Perhaps if each one of this couple would acknowledge their mistake, would confess that they were miserable while the other was having a good time with someone else, cordial relations would be resumed, and all would be well. In many cases, though, this would not happen. Pride would override honesty, the habit of flirting would be established, and this, sooner or later, would lead to estrangement and even separation.

If flirting is mental adultery before marriage it is so after, and much more certainly. The married flirt, if a man, is a despicable object. Invariably he flirts with unmarried girls, raising emotions and expectations which he cannot honourably satisfy and spoiling the girl for her legitimate lover. Many sad cases have occurred of girls whose first awakening to womanhood has been through the agency of one of these thieves of love, who takes the bloom off the fruit he has no intention of making his own. Led by the force of unsatisfied desire to unbalanced reasoning, the girl has either begun a course of professional immorality or, finding that her “passion” is hopeless, has taken her own life rather than face a life of shame or of self-denial. The married woman flirt, though the results are not often so tragic, unless the object of her careless attention is an impulsive and passionate boy, places herself in many an embarrassing position through indulgence in this particular form of bravado.

So much spurious sentiment, too, is sheer waste, even if nothing worse. It excites feelings and desires which should be reserved solely for the one whom each has promised to love. One cannot keep spending the small change of affection without taking from the capital. It is spendthrift sentiment to play at love-making, and, indulged in too often, leads eventually to emotional bankruptcy.

By giving this advice one does not mean that before-marriage friends should be avoided after. Many young wives have a strange disinclination to letting their husband keep friendly with his still bachelor friends. This is a mistake. Treat his friends badly at the new home and he will feel obliged to treat them all the better out, and that will be costly. Don't let your husband feel that the bar-parlour is a more hospitable place than yours. Better to have your curtains smoked a little than the club's—a great deal. If you could hear the conversation in that smoke-room about the cold reception your husband's best friend met with at the new home you would be hot enough, young wife. A boy's best friend is his mother and a husband's best friend is his wife. Let him feel this, and there will be no need for flirtation to prove to the outside world the complete trust you deservedly give each other.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HOLY BONDS.

“Marriage is the nursery of heaven.”—*Jeremy Taylor*.

“Falling in love and winning love are often difficult tasks, but to keep in love!”—*R. L. Stevenson*.

“In marriage, as in all things, contentment excels wealth.”—*Molière*.

“Hail wedded love, mysterious law; true source
Of human offspring; sole propriety
In paradise of all things common else.”

Milton.

It is a fact worthy of notice that writers of all ages—poets, essayists, novelists—look upon marriage as a sacred institution, and our own Prayer Book is only voicing generally expressed opinion when it refers to the marriage tie as “the holy bonds.”

We have already seen how necessary it is in those days which precede matrimony that the laws of reason and common sense should actuate those who contemplate entering into this state. But not only should preparation be careful and first steps sensible, the afterwards of married life—that time when the “difficult task,” as Stevenson calls it, of falling in love and winning love is over—should be as thoughtfully undertaken.

The perfect union in religion is the Trinity. The marriage Trinity—love, honour, and obedience—should be the religion of every home. Love comes first, and although it may be thought that this goes without saying, it is surprising what a number of marriages are undertaken without love entering into the calculations of either party.

By love we do not mean that spurious species of sentiment which is brought about and characterised largely by a desire for romance. One has come across

the phrase "in love with love," and that exactly describes the sort of feeling which actuates many of both sexes when they contemplate matrimony.

There is probably not a human being in the world of a certain age who has not, at one time or another, imagined him or herself in love. The very phrase chosen to express their feelings betrays them. People who are actuated by false sentiment or a romantic yearning for an interest in life speak of themselves as being "in love." "I am so 'gone' on him—or her" is another expression which means exactly what it says, and no more. To be "in love" is the normal condition of a certain age. It is as catching as measles, and for young people who contract the complaint there is only one remedy in both cases—isolation until the symptoms subside. The only danger to be apprehended from both measles and calf-love is in its after effects, matrimony being as deadly in one case as cold would be in the other. The result would be death in both—of real love in the case of the mental disaffection, of the afflicted one in the case of the physical.

"I love" is an expression of a totally different feeling, and it is one that is seldom heard. True love is reticent. Calf-love goes about bleating of its object until the patience of the listener is exhausted, and very often the constant expression of it exhausts the supply of the commodity too.

A commonsense writer on this subject says: "It is supremely important that all young people who contemplate marriage should be sure that the proposed union is based upon a love and adaptation that will ensure continual devotion and stand the stress and strain of practical life." We would go further than that. We would say that the love which does not

stand that strain is not love. Interest it may have been, friendship, desire, all these are insufficient of themselves to remain one of the Holy Trinity of marriage. An old adage says, "When poverty comes in at the door, love flies out of the window." This is only half a truth. That was not love that went if poverty, even the most grinding, is sufficient to drive it away.

Love is a nameless something outside physical attraction, outside mental affinity, as the soul is outside both mind and body. It can exist where, to outsiders, there is no beauty whatever that the two concerned should desire each other; it can, and often does, flourish where two minds have nothing in common. It is altogether outside reason and law, this love, and although both may be brought to bear on it, to forbid its manifestation, if it is true love it will neither decay nor die under such repression.

The secret of Love's immortality is that it, in itself, is Life. If we knew where life came from we should know, and perhaps could prophesy, what makes that indefinable attractiveness whereby one man chooses a certain woman out of all the world, or why one woman chooses a certain man. For, make no mistake here, women choose their partners in life as much as men. Conventionality and the accepted standard of womanly modesty in this age make woman the apparently chosen, but a woman is no more able to prevent her heart going out to one certain man beyond another than a man is. Most women are mute on this point. Feminine confidences, as we have hinted before, made on this subject to bosom friends are only the froth of first love. Women who *love*, instead of being *in love*, never divulge that secret to one of their own sex. If, as has sometimes happened, feeling has

been allowed to sweep away the barriers and woman has "spoken first" to the man of her choice, such confidences are sacred, and should be guarded as a man would guard his own honour.

But, granted that the love has been reciprocal, that the woman of his choice responds, that real love has been discovered in both, sanctified by its consummation in "the holy bonds" of matrimony, there yet remains to conserve that love so that it shall last, and the only way to do this brings us to the second necessity of our Trinity—honour.

Honour your partner is an accepted axiom in all decent marriages, and it is the fundamental basis of security in society at large.

One often hears it said that "there is one law for the rich and another for the poor," and many a wife paraphrases this in her own mind into "one law for the man and another for the woman." In some relations in life this may be practical and even necessary. Between brother and sister, for instance, where large interests are involved, it may be that the education and privileges of the boys should be better and wider than the girls. In some cases, even politically, one might imagine laws which might favour the man and restrict the woman. In the one matter we have in mind, that of personal purity after marriage, there surely should be one law for both.

Every self-respecting woman will resent, surely, her husband's leaving her to gratify what must, after all, be inordinate appetite and not natural desire elsewhere. A man who allows himself this licence is injuring, first, himself. The law of temperance holds good in the marriage relation as surely as in every other in life. Wholesome discipline in this respect is good not only physically, but morally. "A man of

honour," "debts of honour," these are phrases which have come to be used very loosely, and to denote the very opposite of their obvious meaning. A man of honour is one who so curbs his passions as to be master of himself at all times; debts of honour are those vows of allegiance which he owes and has vowed to pay to her only to whom he has promised to cleave until death do them part.

Second, the unchaste man runs grave risk of fatally injuring his wife by licentious ways. Few men of mature age need any enlightenment on this subject. The risk of infection, not only for himself, but for her, who is "one flesh" with him, is enormous. Only medical men in our great cities know the extent of the evil, and these speak with no uncertain voice. To the man who runs after the "strange woman," whether he be single or married, there is a special hell reserved, and that in this world, not in the next.

"Husbands, love your wives" is followed in Scripture by the exact degree to which this love should govern marital relationship—"So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies." No man loves his wife like this who would risk her health by his own over-indulgence.

Third, a married man should be "the husband of one wife" for the children's sake. On this point, too, surely there is no need to be plain. Yet, to judge by the diseased specimens of humanity which fill our hospitals and lunatic asylums, one would think that men knew nothing of the results of excess. In this, as in many things, it is almost impossible to do wrong and for good to come of it. No limitations of opportunity ever justify infant mutilation. We shall deal, in the chapter on Divorce, on the legal aspects of whether a man, whose wife is unfit, unwilling, or

unable to fulfil her wifely duties, should continue to stand in that relation to him, but, whatever the law on the question, a man should be man enough to answer this question for himself. To make his innocent offspring pay for his own self-indulgence, be it necessity or not, is a criminal act. When the law recognises the sacredness of the marriage tie so as to do away with this hideous injustice to posterity by legalising divorce for this cause the world will be healthier, and therefore better, than it is possible for it to be to-day.

As for the personal purity, the chastity, of the married woman, that is a thing that should be so unassailable that the reverse is absolutely unthinkable. Her honour is his honour, and although it does sometimes happen that a woman after marriage finds she has "made a mistake," so long as he keeps his part of the bond it is unpardonable for a wife to dream she can absolve herself from hers. In old days unfaithfulness in a wife was punishable by death, a sentence which could be executed by the husband without social condemnation. In America to-day the "unwritten law," as exemplified in the famous Thaw case, which justifies a man taking the life of another whom he suspects of having deliberately led his wife astray, is only a more modern rendering of the same idea. The idea itself will show with what abhorrence all classes look upon unfaithfulness in a wife. That idea is probably based on deeply instinctive physiological reasons. Conception is rare among women who are habitually immoral. A woman's whole *raison d'être* should be "motherhood." There, in a sentence, we have the whole reasoning on the question. Man's laws are God's laws here, as we shall find, if we go deeply enough into any question, they generally are.

Religion is sanctified common sense, and an impure mother outrages both God's law and man's. Women do not always honour God in their lives; they never do if they do not honour their husbands.

The third factor in the trinity of married life is obedience, and in how many homes has this been the rock on which happiness has been wrecked! It is unfortunate, perhaps, that while the man is bidden to "cherish" his wife, the woman is bidden to obey her husband.

We heard of a couple once who had many an argument on this point before marriage, and at the actual ceremony the husband-to-be teased his bride by whispering the question "Clean my boots?" just as the clergyman had reached the important word "obey." The bride repeated the noxious word, but, as she triumphantly told her husband afterwards, put "dis" in front of it, under her breath, thus rendering it null and void as far as she was concerned.

Some modern brides stipulate that the objectionable word shall be left out altogether. They would not so act if they realised the exact meaning of the word, and how great a bearing it has not only in the relations of the wife to the husband, but on those of the one who has promised to "love his wife as himself." In this connection, and in order to correct the popular idea that by obedience of the wife domination by the husband is inferred, let every married person read carefully Paul's letter to the Ephesians, from the 22nd to the 33rd verse.

Many parents there are, I know, who do not build their home upon a religious basis. They do not see any reason why they should "acknowledge God in their ways," but even these may read the words with profit if they read them without prejudice, putting

into them the meaning exactly apparent—no less and no more.

There they will see that the obedience is mutual—moreover, understood deeply—that it is a mutual obedience to the Laws of Health which is inculcated.

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands as unto the Lord; he is the saviour of the body,” could never mean that a wife would be justified in submitting to marital excess in any relation of life, whether sexual or any other.

“Let everyone in particular so love his wife as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband.”

These again are two sides of one shield. No one could reverence a husband who either was unfaithful to or demanded more of her than he would of himself were he the “weaker vessel,” and where a woman cannot reverence, she surely cannot obey. They are to dwell together “according to knowledge.” Now it is not knowledge, it is ignorance, to suppose that any one of the trinity of attributes—love, honour, and obedience—is more important than another. It is not “according to knowledge” if a woman does not realise that at certain times obedience to the man’s desires are absolutely criminal.

These subjects are treated of fully in other works; your own medical man will be frank with you if you ask him when in doubt, but your own observation in nature, and, above all, consideration for each other, should lead the wife to see that she can honour her husband most only when she obeys her own deep-seated instinct as to what is and is not permissible in married life. Let her watch her partner, almost, I was going to say, as if he were her dear child (and it is true that in the love of most women for their

husbands there is a great deal of the motherly). She will find, perhaps, that the result of a too pliant attitude on her part will lead to the weakening of mental as well as physical power in her husband. No man who indulges to excess can be strong in other ways, and many a wife who deplores the fact that her husband is a drunkard, bad-tempered, nervy, and does not "get on" in business because of a total lack of ambition and mental activity, will find in her own unwise reading of the marriage meaning of "obedience" the reason of his incapacity.

Strangely enough, it is often the purest-minded among women, and those who are most truly religious, who lack illuminating knowledge on this point. Observation has proved the fact that "a rake" has a strange fascination for a good woman—whether because she wishes to prove to herself that goodness is the natural corrective to badness (which is not scientifically true, if she did but know) or whether it is for the sheer attraction of opposites. The fact that did women demand more goodness in man more would be supplied is not often as clear. To marry a man to reform him is a sufficiently hopeless task, as many a wife can testify, but the task would be less hopeless, the result surer, did women realise the interdependence of the appetites. Excess in one department cannot be cured by excess in the other. It is more likely to be made worse, for by excess in the use of any function the will is weakened, and this is the primary cause of ill-doing and consequent unhappiness.

In obtaining for herself this trinity of blessings in married life a woman obtains them not only for her partner as well, but for the children. Pre-marital influences are all important if the married life is to be wisely undertaken and happily consummated. That

pre-natal influences should be good is absolutely essential for the well-being of the fruit of the perfect union. We treat fully of this subject from the child's point of view in a succeeding chapter. It is necessary to see here how much a good man may have to do with good children, and how great is the responsibility of the woman in finding out exactly what should be her attitude towards those mutual questions which are sure to arise when the "holy bonds" have been formed, and then to act firmly and kindly within that knowledge.

Of the physical inheritance with which unhealthy or uncontrolled parents may dower their children we shall speak later. There are mental and spiritual tendencies which may be transmitted too, and, wonderfully enough, these begin to be formed as early as the others.

"He has got his father's temper" you often hear a mother say. In this, as in other matters, it would be well if parents would realise, as one writer has said, "that the work of *right* forming is greater than the work of *reforming*." Granted that the laws of health and of good living have been obeyed before marriage, and that the parents are such as should enter into the "holy bonds" of matrimony, what physical features the child has must be left largely to chance. Circumstances over which neither parent has any control often interfere, to predestinate a child to a life of defective health. What the child may be, one cannot always decide. What the child will think may be very often determined, and thus will decide what the child will become in after life.

"Think beauty." We should like to see those two words written up large in the bedroom of every married couple. It has been proved as a scientific fact that what a woman thinks of most during the nine months when her baby "lies beneath her heart"

is what the child's thoughts and desires will most often dwell on while it is growing. While not going quite so far as to say that success may be assured in any given trade or profession if that line of thought be persistently dwelt on before the child's birth, yet it is obvious that a generally good disposition may be ensured if the parents both have kind, considerate, generous, and noble thoughts while their offspring is being formed. Individuality is the gift of God. Somewhere in the "Father's House" your child is waiting, endowed with those particular gifts and attributes which will differentiate him from every other child which has ever, or will ever, be born. He will be himself primarily, but besides, he will inherit from his earthly parents tastes and proclivities which may make him a blessing or curse not only to himself, but to those around him and to future generations.

It is an old idea that children inherit the father's physical and the mother's mental tendencies. Such an idea may not be scientifically correct. We all know children who prove the exact opposite, but, broadly speaking, it may be accepted as a pretty general rule. Thus, as women have to wait to be chosen, it would seem that they could do very little towards ensuring that the physical attributes of their children should be what they most admire. But granted that most women have to take "what they can get" and that this will be increasingly so when this war, so destructive of the manhood of the world, is at an end, it yet remains that women may so influence the race that is to be that, as in Scripture, "her children will rise up and call her blessed."

God give every woman who reads these pages the wisdom so to bear the "holy bonds" that her influence may be for good on posterity to uncounted generations.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WAITING TIME.

“And so the sweet hour passed and left a fragrance behind it. They had tasted of the holy wine of joy, and had blessed the cup.”—*A. C. Benson.*

“Come closer; lay your hand in mine; your love
Is the one sure possession that will last.
Let us be brave and when the shadow comes
To beckon us to the leap, rise lightly up
And follow with firm eyes and resolute soul
Whither he leads—one heart—one hand—to live
Together, or if death be death—to die.”

Bowen.

“WHEN the shadow comes.” Yes, in that waiting time, before what old-fashioned people call “pledges” of love arrive, then is the time when shadows gather, and the young wife looks into the future with anxious foreboding, wondering if it is to bring her joy or sorrow, if the reaping time will be worth the sowing, if the harvest will be death or life, more life.

Let us see if we cannot penetrate these shadows. The great change which comes unsought as much as that other great change which we call death is, after all, so common a thing, old as the hills, natural as eating, drinking or sleeping, surely there must be rules to make this waiting time a time of blessed preparation, not a time of anxiety and dread.

There are. Many books have been written on the subject. Scientists have experimented, doctors practised, all, so that the waiting time may be made a time of joyful anticipation. Let us see if we cannot

simplify this complicated web of advice and criticism, so as to get a clear idea, in as little space as possible, of what both parents may be doing while they are waiting for the natural results of that love beyond expression which is to be incarnated in the little one they will call their first child.

Place aux dames. The wife is the all-important person now, and the husband, in his tender care and consideration, his anxiety for her health and comfort, will be the first to acknowledge this.

First, then, let it be remembered that what she is now experiencing is a perfectly natural transformation, and should be undergone with little or no pain.

Many waiting wives, however, experience the direct opposite of this, and often, it must be admitted, mainly owing to their own foolishness and ignorance. Ignorance may be a reason for wrong doing—it is never an excuse—and any young wife who feels all is not well with her, and yet does not know exactly what is wrong, should consult a medical man—or better still, a medical woman—at once, and confide the whole story to him or her.

There is a right way and a wrong way to spend this time, and, broadly speaking, the simpler the life the more easy it will be to follow the right way. It should be kept in mind, for instance, that pain means disease, and disease death. Directly pregnancy is suspected the young wife should see her medical adviser, who will tell her what is usual and will order her what to avoid in her daily life and habits which she, perhaps, previously enjoyed.

We have touched briefly on the mental attitude of the waiting mother in its effects on the child. Needless to say, it is as important to the mother's own health that her mental outlook should be fair,

free from worry as much as possible, and also free from undue excitement.

In ancient Greece pregnant women were secluded so that neither sight, sound or touch which could be disagreeable to them would disturb the even flow of their days. In these times of stress it is hardly ever possible that the woman should be so secluded, nor is it absolutely necessary. A certain amount of work and responsibility will keep her from dwelling on her own condition, and thus imagining that what is abnormal in it is wrong. Women in this condition get "fancies," and though it is not good too harshly to cross them, on the other hand a little wise insistence on the ordinary life and diet being kept to as much as possible will do no harm.

In this way a husband who really cares for his wife may have immense influence in keeping her "sane"—taking that word in its original meaning as "full of health." He will see to it that though not unwisely exerting herself, she does not hide herself away entirely because of a quite natural shyness about her condition. He will see to it, also, that the friends who visit her will not be for ever talking of all the horrors of abnormal births and of the "bad time" she may expect. Older women often are the worst offenders in this respect. If the husband comes home from business to find his wife nervy and fearful, he may be sure that the friends who called in the afternoon to "cheer her up" have had the very opposite effect, and he should take such steps as will readily occur to a man of tact to make sure that, while he does not offend these often well-meaning people so that their help is not available at need, they are warned that his wife is too young and inexperienced to be told all she may expect in childbirth.

The truth about what she is going to experience is that there is nothing unnatural or to be dreaded in the whole affair. This is a side of the question which cannot be too much dwelt on, and female friends who will talk cheerfully, courageously, *and not too much* on the subject should be cultivated by the husband who wishes his wife's mental outlook to be a help and not a hindrance to her physical condition.

While dulness and loneliness are to be avoided for the waiting mother, the excitement of much visiting, theatre-going, card-playing, etc., should be strictly limited. At theatres or picture palaces there is no guarantee possible that what is seen or heard will not be painful or depressing. A good laugh at a cheerful play never hurts, but the heat and crush at the theatre, the cold return journey, and the fatigue incident to the late hour at which home is reached is an experience which should not be often undergone, even if the design is to spend a cheerful two hours and take the wife "out of herself." The husband could as readily do this if he would set himself as earnestly to interest his wife as in the courting days. Men are apt to think that once in love, always in love. The opposite is the case really. Love is not an everlasting flower, though with proper care and attention it may be perennial. Love is a tender plant which wants nursing. The daily nurture of little kindnesses are like water to it—the warmth of tenderness is the sun which makes it flower. Neglect is the cold, dry wind which will cause it to wither—active unkindness is the frost which will kill in a night.

Many a husband who finds his meal prepared by a cosy fireside and his wife ready and willing to devote herself to his comfort is so immersed in his own feelings that he has not a thought to spare for hers.

He ignores the fact that she also has been busy all day, as evidenced by his neat home and his prepared meal. More, he forgets utterly that she has been working, probably, in solitude. His work takes him into the world, where he can talk, exchange ideas, watch other lives, interest himself in a thousand outside happenings. His wife has been shut in on herself. Her outlook has been the house opposite, her conversation limited to giving orders to the tradespeople, her excitement watching the postman go from door to door.

What a shock it would be for some selfish husbands if the wife snatched down the paper behind which he was entrenched after his comfortable meal, exclaiming :

“ Tell me something, talk, or I shall go mad ! ” Yet many young wives feel this way, and it is “ up to ” the husband to talk to his wife, read to her, play with her, do anything to break the monotony of her existence while her condition debars her from joining in those jaunts and jollifications to which they used to go together when they were first married.

So much for the mental attitudes of both husband and wife in this waiting time. They can be summed up in three words—Consideration, Care, Caution. The first embraces the husband’s duty to the wife ; the second, the wife’s to the husband ; the third, their joint duty to the unborn child.

The physical duties of this time are ones which must be modified to suit each case, and for which, therefore, no hard-and-fast rule can be laid down. The doctor who is to have the ushering in of the new life should have the full particulars of the case from the beginning. Ordinarily, there will be nothing to worry him about, and no need for frequent visits, but there

are many little disabilities which can be medically treated, and which will disappear, probably, or be much alleviated by advice and medicine.

Morning sickness, if excessive, is one of these, and it is highly important for the health of the mother and her easy delivery that constipation should be guarded against. A little knowledge of her own internal structure and different organs, such as can be imparted by a medical man, will readily show why this is so. Details of this nature need not be given here, and should not be dwelt on, but it is well to know that the ordinary functions of nature should go on unchecked if there is not to be undue pain and danger when the child arrives. To this end it will be found for most waiting mothers that a diet in which fruit takes a large part is better than one composed of rich, fatty meats, and juices. Fruit will bring about natural action, and its acidity will correct the conditions which give rise to nausea. In any case, harsh purgatives are dangerous, and have been known even to produce miscarriage. They should never be resorted to unless under medical orders. Frequent bathing, too, should never be neglected. Sitz baths, those in which the loins, etc., only are immersed, and then massage with olive oil, will keep the parts supple. A "set" condition of the muscles and ligaments means hard labour and additional pain, and should be avoided if possible.

Exercise is good, but only if taken in moderation. An old writer advises cold baths, massage, and physical drill for the waiting mother, but though this may have been good for the classic time and the simple conditions under which women lived when he wrote, centuries even before the "spacious times of Good Queen Bess," yet civilisation has so altered women's

life and work that this advice must be considerably modified if it is to be used to advantage. Women are more "coddled" now, even in middle-class households. They are not exposed to heat and cold so much—their dress is often tiring, even if not actually injurious, so that to indulge in much physical exercise, with the organs so cramped as they are in the modern corset, would sometimes cause actual injury.

In undertaking physical exercise of any kind the expectant mother must remember that there is a vast difference between courage and rashness, and must act accordingly. These remarks apply, of course, to the home woman—the one who has the regulating of her own activities—and may decide for herself just how much conjugal coddling is good for her, and how much exercise and "hardening" she should indulge in.

Unfortunately for the coming race, there are thousands, nay millions, of mothers who have to undertake work far more dangerous to health than the most strenuous physical exercise in order to do their share in "keeping the wolf from the door."

For such women legislation is the only means of regulating their work so that they may pursue it without risk. Perhaps some day this fair land of ours will be rich enough to dispense with the work of waiting mothers, except in their own homes, where they could all be usefully employed in looking after the needs of the husband and children and preparing for the advent of the next child. When our legislators realise that healthy childhood, and plenty of it, is a country's only real wealth, this will be so. Perhaps a percentage of devoted and intelligent women legislators (who must surely be able to appreciate the needs of their sisters better than men) will bring this day

nearer. Meanwhile, it remains for women who can regulate their own actions to a great extent to see to it that neither foolhardy rashness on the one hand nor self-indulgent laziness on the other do anything to mar the perfection of the new life they are responsible for.

In these days, when women are straining every nerve to take the place of husband, brother, father, or friend who is fighting for his country abroad, extra care is needed so that enthusiasm does not outrun discretion in this direction.

To the old-fashioned of both sexes it is always a little painful to see women undertaking heavy manual labour. Perhaps there is at the present time urgent need that they should do all which men have hitherto done, but it should be legally impossible to employ for this work married women. There are hundreds of strong, healthy, unmarried women still employed in trades which supply the luxuries of the buying public. These should be released for manual work where such work is absolutely necessary, and thus "the back be fitted for the burden." It is spendthrift national policy to endanger the future race as we are doing. It is employing two instead of one—using up interest and capital where interest alone, properly expended, would suffice.

This waste, objectors will perhaps argue, it is impossible to prevent. But we beg to differ. The waste of young manhood is inevitable, perhaps. The war is, and whatever our convictions on its immorality, honour and expedience combine to force us to fight to a finish. The husbands must go. But to employ our wives in hurtful labour is to sacrifice the children as well as the fathers. It is race suicide, and if organisation of women's labour, even if conscription

for women is to prevent it, no thinking woman would shrink from such a course.

In this, as in other necessities of this world-war, time is required to make the need obvious. Once that is realised, no sentimental objection to force should be listened to, and no lazy shrinking to the labour involved in organisation allowed to stop the necessary steps being taken. Compulsion comes in everyone's history. The compulsion of necessity, the compulsion of love. In our national history compulsory military service has already arrived for men. Let compulsory national service come for women, only let it come in the way in which it will really serve the nation's best interests, by conserving the health, nay, more, the very existence of the future race.

The last important thing for the woman to see to in her waiting time is the selection of the doctor, and nurse or midwife, who is to see her through her hour of trial.

And here let me put in a plea either for the certificated midwife or for the woman doctor. Without in any way disparaging the devotion and cleverness of medical men at such a time, I would have women consider whether it is not more natural for woman to wait on woman in her hour of need. Doubtless there are some women who would rather have a man doctor than the cleverest woman doctor or midwife. They are the women who are old-fashioned and conventional in their upbringing and outlook. They "trust men more," not realising, what is profoundly true and what most medical men are the first to acknowledge, that there is no sex in brain, and that women have taken as high degrees and proved themselves as capable, devoted, and courageous in this realm of science as men.

Other things being equal, it seems to me that women should have more patience with, more understanding of their sex than men. One does, alas! sometimes hear of impatient doctors in maternity cases—men who, to save themselves the trouble of another night journey, will cause the mother untold pain, the child, perhaps, real injury, by the use of instruments to bring about a quick birth.

In her choice of a medical man or woman the young wife should be influenced by such considerations; Nature, at these times, is usually best left alone. Indeed, it often happens that where the mother is peculiarly adapted for child-bearing, the birth takes place without outside help or interference at all. In such cases all the mother need worry about is, that the nurse is properly qualified, clean, capable, resourceful, and, above all, one in whom the young mother has every confidence.

This can invariably be ensured beforehand. An interview or two will tell most women whether their nurse, however highly recommended, is one whom they personally can trust. If the nurse is full of gossip about the case she is at or ones she has attended, especially if it be family gossip or lugubrious tittle-tattle, let her not engage such a person. Where a trained nurse can be afforded, and one recommended by the doctor employed, this is almost always best. It may happen that her particular case, especially if it be a first child, will be one that will demand more surgical knowledge than is usually possessed by the untrained nurse. Where money is no object, the best that can be obtained is not too good for the mother and child at such times, but where money is scarce there is, happily, in almost every town, however small, one woman who understands maternity nursing. Her

wide experience may possibly take the place of hospital training, and where she is intelligent, clean, not indolent or too talkative, temperate, and not too old and stout to undertake the duties, she can be employed with confidence. In normal maternity cases, as we have said before, Nature is the best doctor, and she is also the best nurse, and to her kind offices the young mother, if ordinarily healthy and careful, may leave herself with a quiet mind.

To sum up, the waiting time for the expectant mother should be one of prayerful preparation, rational action, and joyful anticipation. When she realises that with her rests the whole future—physical, mental, and spiritual—of the little life which she is creating as co-worker with God, Who alone gives life, she will so order this waiting time that it will be what it should—the ante-chamber to the House of Life—not to be made the scene of frivolous dissipation or of slothful waste, but to be a holy place, wherein is prepared, with loving care, all that will make for the health and comfort of the body and soul she is entrusted with.

CHAPTER VIII.

BY THEIR FRUITS.

“Lo, children are an inheritance of the Lord.”—*Psalm cxxvii. 3.*

“Love’s self the noblest offspring is,
And sanction of the nuptial kiss.”

Coventry Patmore.

“Take a vine of a good soil, and a daughter of a good mother.”—*Italian Proverb.*

“The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children’s teeth have been set on edge.”—*Ezekiel xviii. 2.*

“It’s a wise child that knows its own father.”—*Old Proverb.*

“It doesn’t matter a bit about being born in a duckyard when one has lain in a swan’s egg.”—*Hans Andersen.*

IF a child could choose! What a world of speculation this simple phrase gives rise to. If a child could choose, for instance, even so unimportant a thing as its name, one wonders how many would choose the long or pretentious Christian name with which so many romantic or ambitious young couples have burdened their children.

If a child could choose its parents. Here, happily for domestic happiness, children even of the most obviously incapable parents seem to be endowed with a sort of fine indifference and natural pride which make them careless of the drawbacks of their own homes and proud of their own parents, whatever may be their limitations. Besides, it is open to every parent, however poor and however ignorant, to make up by love and care for whatever is lacking in material things. “It’s a wise child that knows its own father.” True, but it’s a wise father who resolves that his child shall only know what is best in him.

If a child could choose its birthday. Here again, and under Providence, it's a wise mother who will choose that her child's birthday comes as nearly as possible in the spring of the year.

All sorts of fair and good things are promised, in old proverbial lore, to April babies and to the baby born in sweet May or merry June, and surely here, as in so many cases, the popular voice is the voice of wisdom.

The spring baby has everything in its favour. Clean house—for the spring cleaning is finished preparatory to the mother's resting time—and clean weather, for the dirty fogs and dreary snows of winter are over, the sky is fresh washed and blue so that the child's eyes reflect its colour, the trees are clothing themselves with new, tender green. Buttercups and daisies (and all the spring flowers are babies' flowers)—the very lambs are new in the meadows, and the birds in their nests are as excited over their house-keeping adventures as the newly-made human father and mother are over theirs.

A clean bill of health belongs to the spring baby, too. Winter colds and coughs should be done away with, the new little mother gains fresh health and strength by every walk which is undertaken daily in the spring sunshine for baby's sake, baby himself flourishes in the fresh air which is as essential to his health as it is to the health of every flower that blows or bird that sings. The spring baby ought to be a healthy baby if its mother has prepared not only the wee clothes and the right care and attention for its entrance into the spring world, but herself for undergoing that change which maternity makes in every woman's life. If she wants a beautiful child—and what mother doesn't?—she will have been thinking health and

beauty from the first moment when she knew that there was a possibility she was to become a mother in due time.

Moreover, she will have been living such a life as will make the act of maternity easy, and in this important particular there is one thing which women overlook very often, that is, the proper support, without undue pressure, of that body of theirs which is the cradle of the unborn child.

In this realm let there be no mistake. Although much has been done by the spread of medical knowledge to prevent that deformity known as the “wasp waist” being fashionable, the ordinary corset of commerce is still far from what it should be.

In reality, corsets at all are unnecessary, and the tight corset an abomination. Woman was so made that, had she not grown used to the restriction and so-called support of the corset, her bony structure would have afforded all the support her organs needed. The corset habit is the curse of civilised women. In countries where women do not wear them, birth is absolutely painless, and it is an exception where it is followed by illness of any sort. The natives of some parts of South Africa, for instance, will leave the place where they are working in the open fields, secrete themselves for a while, and return in an hour or so with their new-born babe in their arms. Apparently neither mother nor child are any the worse for this absolutely natural birth, and doctors are unanimous that its painlessness is due to the fact that the organs of the mother have never been distorted or compressed by corsets.

Even in the parts of Egypt and India where the native women are more civilised, so long as the corset habit has not been contracted, childbirth is compara-

tively free from pain, and would be altogether unattended by danger could the sanitary conditions which obtain in civilised countries be applied there. At the present time, by the use of medical missions and the building of hospitals, much has been done, even in the remote parts of the Sudan, to make childbirth as free from danger as it is already from pain, and more will be accomplished once those who have the power realise what a great help towards true religion is a healthy womanhood and a natural childhood.

In this and other highly-civilised countries, however, it is shutting the stable door after the steed is stolen to point out the advantages of corsetless countries. For good or ill, modern woman, generally speaking, has contracted the corset habit, but much might be done to mitigate its evil effects if women would, at all times, wear a rational corset, and at special times wear either none at all or one specially suited to the bodily condition. Such corsets may be had, and the publishers of this book have been at special pains to produce a garment which, while giving the maximum support, shall do so with the minimum pressure on the vital organs.

For the waiting mother and for the nursing mother these corsets are all that the most up-to-date scientific knowledge and experiment would wish, and women who want to keep their organs so healthily placed and supported that they may meet all the special demands which womanhood makes on them with ease and comfort are earnestly advised to consult the pages at the end of this book, choose the corset which will meet their special requirements, and wear no other.

That there is a great deal of preventible pain connected with childbirth enlightened practitioners in this and in other countries are beginning to think.

Right living, regular habits, cleanliness, proper clothes, exercise and rest, are all, as we have already pointed out, steps in the direction of painless child-bearing. But when all has been done it remains that there are many women who from one cause and another have reason to look forward with dread to the advent time. While courage is essential if one is to get through many of the ills which flesh is heir to, there is a kind of cowardice in connection with this particular event which is quite pardonable. No one is expected to go through such pain as would be experienced in the operation for appendicitis, or even such nerve-racking pain as is implied when a tooth is drawn, without having the aid of an anæsthetic. Yet there are plenty of people who are ready to argue that the equally nerve-trying and intolerably painful process of bringing a child into the world should be met by the frailest woman without help of any kind. A great many medical men still—and thousands of mothers and grandmothers of the old school—sneer at women who are eager to accept such help as is offered in the use of certain drugs. It is liable to injure the child for life, they argue, and were their contentions provable in even one case, their arguments would be worth listening to.

We think it will be found, however, that where injury to the child has resulted, the cause has been other than the mere use of an anæsthetic for the mother, and certainly, with the use of a comparatively new method which induces what has been picturesquely termed “twilight sleep,” the benefits to be gained seem far to outweigh any risk which might be attached to it.

Many doctors in this country have been using “scopolamine morphine,” as the drug is called, in

obstetrical cases for as long as three years. On the continent it has been known and used for eight or nine, and the verdict in its favour seems to be unanimous. Women of all ages, even those turned forty, to whom maternity, coming so late in life, might prove dangerous, speak in favour of it. To women of nervous, highly-strung temperaments, such as most modern women unfortunately possess, and the super-sensitive—those of the so-called “artistic temperament”—“twilight sleep” comes as a boon and a blessing. Women who, by reason of this temperamental sensitiveness to pain, the artists and creators of life, have deliberately cut themselves off from the supreme joy of maternity, have been led to do their part in reproducing what should, after all, be the finest type of childhood by the fact that in “twilight sleep” they may bring their child into the world without any strain to nerves already at the utmost tension.

Although, of course, generally speaking, one's own medical adviser should be the one to decide whether this particular anæsthetic is suitable, yet no woman who values her health and the well-being of her child should submit to all the tortures of too prolonged or dangerous delivery without satisfying herself that there is not a new and a better way.

There is plenty of literature on this subject. Doctors everywhere who are up-to-date and have time to do their best for each individual case are trying the method, and every woman who has reason to fear the effects of extreme pain, either on herself or on her child, should make herself thoroughly acquainted with the new ideas on the subject.

Posterity has its definite rights as well as ancestry. It is the unspoken right of every baby, even the poorest, to be well born. What are those rights?

The right, as we have already seen, of healthy and easy birth, and also the right to be loved. How often one hears people say of any particularly bright and beautiful specimen of childhood, "It must be a love-child." What is meant every mature person understands. In a moment, when the love of the parents for each other overrode all considerations of prudence and conventional morality, they imply that particular child was conceived. Its beautiful features, perfect form, winning ways, proclaim to the outside world that love went to its fashioning, whatever else was lacking. Therefore . . . !

Without for a moment meaning to imply that irregular unions are the best for posterity, one is led irresistibly to the conclusion that love should be the only excuse for procreation.

"I was just wondering," said a thoughtful, engaged girl to me once, "whether I would like A—to be the father of my children."

It is the attitude every girl should adopt before marriage. Girls, exercise your royal prerogative of choice. If a man's caresses are instinctively repugnant to you, if they even leave you cold and unmoved, think carefully before wealth, or position, or your quite natural longing for "a home of your own," lead you to accept such a man.

If he has grave faults of temper or defects of character, think whether you would like such traits reproduced in your children. If there is no similarity of taste between you, if he can't be "bothered with children" while you love and desire them, if his sole idea in life is to make money, or to enjoy himself without consideration for your requirements or comfort, if he is "all things to all women," and you can imagine him faithless to you once the novelty of

possession is worn off, say "No" to him, and stick to it, without regret.

You have a duty to your children as well as to your husband. You have the "House of Life" in your charge, as well as the house in suburb, town or country, which he has provided. See to it that house is a fit home for the child that is to be. Be sure that it is never entered, even by your husband, when such entrance, through his excesses, would defile it. Be sure that love alone is the key to that house, and that lust never uses a skeleton key to effect an entrance.

Be sure, in a word, that the man to whom you give the right of entry is the one above all others you would choose to be the father of your child; then that child will be, in the fullest and best sense of the phrase, a "love-child," though born in wedlock, and will possess all the characteristics associated with "good" birth.

The rights of childhood imply the sanctity of motherhood, and these it is the privilege of true manhood to ensure.

Of course, this is not to say that every child, even those most wanted and most loved, will be perfect. It is part of our human inheritance that sorrow and suffering should come through and to our children. But it is equally part of Divine Providence that to the little one who is born to suffering an extra share of parental love is usually accorded. The weakling of the family is often the one who is most devotedly cared for, most passionately loved, and it is part of the divine plan of compensation that this should be so.

Perhaps love and not physical fitness has been the only justification for the parents marrying, and the offspring of such marriage have suffered not

so much for the sins as for the humanity of the parents.

Such cases, due sometimes to ignorance, sometimes to reckless disregard of Nature's warning, usually carry with them their own punishment. There can be no more awful thought to loving and thinking human beings than this—that they have been solely responsible for the sufferings of other human beings. In some cases such marriages should be preventible by law. The writer knows of a family where child after child, owing to a defect in the maternal parent, is born mentally defective—not mad, simply lacking. There is nothing to prevent these children marrying and passing their defect on to posterity. When public opinion is properly educated such a state of things will be impossible. But it is not to these obvious cases of inherited tendency I refer now. It is to those cases of a defectively-informed conscience where a woman, or a man, knowing the probable consequences, deliberately takes the risk, shutting their eyes to the future. Where it is positively known that there is a risk, such action is a sin to posterity. It should not only be possible, but usual, for any woman who has any doubt as to her own fitness for maternity or her future husband's for fatherhood, to go to her medical man and ask the question point blank. Until people are enlightened enough, and conscientious enough, to do this, the rights of childhood have not been fully assured.

“By their fruits ye shall know them” is as true in the human as in the vegetable world. Well-living parents ensure well-born children, and the poorest could be as well born in this respect as the richest.

Legislation for the child is, in this country, in its infancy, and it would take a volume to itself to go

into the question of what has been done, and what remains to be done, thoroughly. It is only of late years, indeed, that we have realised the necessity of making laws to safeguard the well-being of the child. Even now one often hears the argument used that too much State interference takes away from the responsibility of the parents. So while, in many cases, the parents don't care and the State cannot, the child suffers and dies. Even were no direct legislation for the child's welfare to be undertaken by the State, there is an immense work to be done in educating the parents on their responsibility to their child, both born and unborn. Ignorance is the mother of Death. There is no such thing as health by accident, as slum workers too well know, and while there is yet room for diversity of opinion as to whether the State should feed, clothe, and nurse its child life, there is surely no denying the fact that a healthy and informed mother is likely to have a healthy and intelligent child. Healthy children are the capital of a country, its pounds, while its parents are the pence. Look after the pence and the pounds will be safe. Child legislation would not be necessary if parental responsibility were properly understood. A woman's social duty can never be thoroughly performed while her maternal duty is neglected. If the young mother would bear this in mind she would solve many of the problems which harass domestic life.

The first of these would be the duty, after ensuring the healthy birth of her child, of nursing it herself to childish maturity. Some women there are who are debarred by nature from exercising this privilege, but, granted that the mother is able to supply the nourishment her child needs, surely no social ties whatever should be allowed to interfere with this duty. Breast-

fed babies are almost invariably the healthiest. The mother's strength supplements their own feeble ability to fight against the maladies which attack babyhood, and it is an obligatory part of a mother's duty to help her child in this way. With healthy mothers, common sense and a little care will ensure that the supply is sufficient, that the process is pleasurable and not painful, and that the organs are kept healthy. Any nurse who is worthy of her vocation will advise an ignorant mother as to what to do in case of pain in the discharge of this duty, or disease in the parts. It will be found also that few doctors will be lax as to a mother delegating this duty, either to another woman or to artificial food, provided always there is the natural capacity. In cases where artificial feeding must be resorted to, absolute cleanliness in the bottles used, exactness as to quantity, and care as to quality of the milk which takes the place of the mother's should be guaranteed.

Books on child-rearing are readily obtained, and the young mother should be guided by these, and also, most important, by her own observation of her baby's peculiar habits and requirements. While it is a great mistake to suppose that all women are "born mothers"—that is, that they know instinctively the best way to bear, nurse, and rear a child—it is certainly true that the "maternal instinct" is one that most women most easily develop. At the root of this instinct, as of the sexual instinct, should be LOVE. "He liveth well who loveth well" is peculiarly true in the relationship, divinely instituted, of mother and child.

CHAPTER IX.

BREAKING THE TIE.

“What God hath joined, let not man put asunder.”—*Matthew xix. 6.*

“Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.”—*2 Cor. vi. 14.*

THERE are few questions on social topics which are surrounded with greater difficulties than that of Divorce. The reason of this may be stated in a few words. Is marriage a civil contract or is it a religious institution?

It will be found that persons who believe in the sanctity of marriage, as the Romish Church does, for instance, consider Divorce on any grounds whatever to be wrong. They base their arguments almost entirely on the first extract which heads this chapter, and on the ground of public morality there is perhaps much to be said for such a view. On the other hand, persons who consider individual justice or happiness, and are not usually guided in their actions by purely religious considerations, argue that marriage is a contract, and, like any other contract in law, if one of the parties contracting break any of the provisions of such contract, the whole partnership is dissolved.

Which of the two opinions cited above are right in the abstract it is not, perhaps, for us to judge. Human nature being what it is, it seems more in keeping with common sense and common morality that, where the tie of marriage obviously galls one of the tied, so that such tie amounts to absolute cruelty, the sooner the marriage can be dissolved the better.

Against the purely religious aspect of the question there is this to be said, that priest-nature is not, and never will be, human nature. The very tie of marriage is one that the priest, in Romish orders at least, denies himself the right to contract. Whence, then, comes his right to dictate to men whose consciences allow them to make the marriage contract as to how long that contract shall last? The law of nature, which is the law of God, is set aside on one hand. Why should it be wrong to set it aside on the other?

On the question of the morality or immorality of divorce, as we have already said, there must always be great diversity of opinion; it remains, therefore, to examine, if we can, briefly, the law concerning divorce in this and in other countries, and thus try to come to a decision, should it ever be unfortunately necessary for the reader of this book to seek ease from the marriage tie, as to the best means of obtaining such release.

It is necessary to notice, in the first place, the reasons for which divorce is granted. If a matrimonial offence is proved to have been committed, for instance, by one of the parties to a marriage, divorce will be granted to the other. If both have committed the offence, no divorce will be granted. This seems somewhat an anomaly, and leads to much inconsistency in legislation.

More, a husband has only to prove adultery against his wife to get divorce at once. A wife has to prove either adultery and desertion, adultery and cruelty, or bigamy and adultery, before she can be free. As a set-off to this seeming hardship, the husband is always liable to pay the costs of a divorce action, whether he or his wife bring it.

Judicial separations or their cheap substitutes,

separation orders, may be obtained for adultery, or cruelty or desertion.

It is an idea which is being much discussed in modern times under the heading of a wider patriotism whether divorce should not be granted either men or women for impotency or barrenness. Though not, on the surface, a very kind necessity, it seems reasonable when we remember the cause for which marriage was ordained that either of these states should prove reason enough for divorce.

To refer back to history, in old Roman law marriage was regarded as a voluntary union which might be terminated at any time; but in the time of Justinian it was subjected to three restrictions—for impotency, or if either party wished to enter a monastery or nunnery, or was for long in captivity. Under these conditions it is easy to see the privilege of divorce might be abused by a man wishing to put away his wife against her desire. Public opinion was much against it, and it was not for 500 years after it was legally possible that we find Spurius Carvilius putting away his wife for barrenness. Later, Roman laws provided that a husband guilty of adultery should repay the wife's dowry in full, while a wife, convicted and divorced for the same offence, could only claim one-sixth of her dowry back.

After A.D. 449 it is interesting to know that a wife could divorce her husband for conspiracy against the State—adultery, attempting her life, trying to induce her to commit adultery, wrongful accusation of adultery, taking a paramour either in his own house or another. A husband could divorce his wife for concealment of plots against the empire, adultery, attempting her husband's life, going to baths or banquets with other men, remaining from home

against his wish, going to circus, theatre, or amphitheatre against his wish.

It will be seen, therefore, that our divorce laws are founded largely on these old laws, even to the fact that it is harder for the woman to get divorce from her husband and easier for him to divorce her. This idea remains in theory to the present day. Payment of money by the husband, or forfeiting it, which comes to the same thing, is retained in our present duty of alimony, while a time limit during which divorced persons may not marry is still part of our divorce laws. Ancient Roman law in divorce is, of course, directed solely against the tie as a civil one. It remained for the canon law, which made it harder for persons to marry, to put insuperable obstacles in the way of dissolving the partnership. Until the Reformation it was considered within the law of consanguinity for persons to marry to the eighth generation. Such marriages were considered null, and people who had married within these degrees were free to marry again. This power of annulling marriages belonged wholly to the Church.

A relaxation of the laws of divorce followed in the wake of the Reformation—either immediately, as in Scotland, or indirectly, as in England. In Roman Catholic countries, of course, the canon law still rules.

Ecclesiastical law obtained in England until 1858, when the Divorce Act was passed. Even this Act did not embody theories advocated by the more liberal reformers, which indeed never have become law. But while the law remained practically what it was, the constitution of marriage belonging still to the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts, many private Acts of Parliament granting complete divorce had come into being.

The law did in particular cases what it refused to do for the general. Two things had to be proved—a divorce from the ecclesiastical courts and an action for damages against the adulterer for “criminal conversation.” What exactly constituted this conversation does not appear, but it seems this second proviso was to guard against persons being granted divorce who had connived at acts of adultery or been guilty of it themselves. As such, this limitation of the granting of divorce obtains now, although the words themselves have been dropped out of the Act.

Of course, all these proceedings cost money, and it will be apparent that divorce existed simply for the rich. The poor had to commit bigamy, and often did, preferring the comparatively small punishment for that offence to remaining with an adulterous or unwilling partner.

This state of things it was which led to the Divorce Act of 1858, by which divorce, as obtained at the ecclesiastical courts, was abolished, and a new remedy called judicial separation was instituted. As well, a wife deserted by her husband might apply for a protection order by which her earnings or property became her own as though she were a single woman. The petition was dismissed if condonation or connivance were found, or if neglect or misconduct on the part of the one bringing the suit be judged to have led to adultery. The wife might claim alimony from the husband should she bring the suit, or the husband damages against the co-respondent should he bring it. Also, such co-respondent might be directed to pay the whole or any part of the costs. Damages might be used, in whole or part, for the benefit of the children of the marriage or the wife.

Though parties so divorced might marry again

by law, the Church steps in here and says that no minister may be compelled to re-marry them, a proviso which marks the old conflict between civil and canonical ideas on divorce.

Amending Acts of this Act of 1858 were numerous, but only one is very important. This is the one which grants decrees nisi for six months, during which time any person may bring forward such information as to collusion or condonation as will render a fresh trial imperative. The decree cannot then be made absolute, which is what takes place automatically should no such facts be brought forward. That is, shortly, the law as regards divorce in England. Let us see how divorce may be obtained in other countries at this time.

In Scotland divorce is somewhat easier to obtain than in England, adultery alone being sufficient grounds for either party. The party injured is able to choose either judicial separation or divorce should cruelty be proved as well. If divorce is chosen, the parties are then considered unmarried, and can re-marry, but not the paramour, if that person's name is mentioned in the decree.

In America divorce is popularly supposed to be deplorably easy, especially in some States. Statistics prove this, but this is not to say that the standard of sexual morality in the United States is lower than in England. It may mean the exact opposite, the standard being so high that in order to reach it increased facilities for dissolving unsuitable partnerships are allowed. In most parts divorce is allowed not only for adultery, but for cruelty, wilful desertion, and drunkenness. Yet in South Carolina no divorce had ever been granted for any cause whatever up to some years ago, and this state of things has brought about

a condition in which, as in France, concubinage is almost legally established, the proportion of his goods which a married man may leave to his concubine being fixed by law.

In many States divorce is possible for other causes than adultery. In New Hampshire, if either partner joins a society like the "Shakers," which believes the relation of husband and wife to be unlawful and therefore refuses cohabitation for three years, that is a sufficient ground for divorce.

In France freedom of divorce was one of the short-lived results of the Revolution. Divorce by mutual consent was allowed, among other things, but under close restrictions as to the age of the partners, the duration of the marriage, the consent of relatives, and the protection of children. No new marriage within three years could be made by either party. Separation was also allowed, but not by consent, and when the wife was convicted of adultery she was sentenced to detention in a house of correction for a period of not less than three months or more than two years. This last clause will show how long ago these old ideas were in vogue. Later, all these clauses, except those of judicial separation, were abolished, and subsequent attempts to restore them have not been successful, modern divorce being allowed for adultery, violence, cruelty, grave indignities, and condemnation of either spouse to afflictive or degrading punishment.

It will thus be seen that while the law of divorce differs so in every country (and even in different parts of the same country, as in the United States), when people move from one country to another, there is considerable difficulty in obtaining divorce. A man may be born in one country, married in another,

domiciled in a third, and wish to obtain a divorce in a fourth. In olden times, for instance, England, and Scotland even, took opposite sides in the question as to whether marriages could be annulled at all. There have been cases in which divorce obtained in the one country was invalid in another, and children born of a marriage contracted on the assumption that the party to it was legally entitled to re-marry have been pronounced illegitimate. A divorce obtained in the United States, however, will be recognised as lawful in the English courts provided that the petitioner is legally domiciled in the State which grants the divorce. For purposes of obtaining divorce this is easily and frequently done by English people.

From all the above it will be seen that divorce is by no means an easy thing to obtain, even should the conduct of the parties be such as would justify legal separation. Perhaps it is rightly difficult, but what cannot be right is that there still seems to be one law for the rich and another for the poor, one for the man and another for the wife. Until our divorce laws are brought into line with common sense and common justice the question of divorce will remain a thorny one.

The remedy of separation, either judicial or by order of a magistrate, is often resorted to when the marriage tie has become unbearable. When a man's action towards his wife amounts to persistent cruelty—that is, when it is such that she has to leave him, either because he won't support her or will beat her—she can go to a magistrate and he will give her an order for separation. This will run thus:—

“The husband and wife shall separate. All or any of the children under 16 shall remain with the mother. The husband shall pay so much a week (not

more than £2) for their support, and if payment is not kept up, the husband's goods may be sold or he may be sent to gaol for three months."

This form of partial divorce is both cheap and easy. To many a poor woman it has come as a perfect godsend. Its effect on the children, by the removal of the parent likely to have a bad influence and by leaving them under the care of the, presumably, decent partner, may be supposed not to be so bad as though either party were free to marry again, as in divorce.

In theory, at all events, this is so. In countries like America where marriages may be dissolved and contracted again with the utmost ease, the condition of the children, not knowing almost from one day to another who is their father, must be deplorable. This is amusingly, if saddeningly, exemplified in Henry James's novel, "*What Maisie Knew*," a very clever and shrewd indictment of American divorce laws.

In some cases, however, human nature being what it is, it is to be feared that separation alone with its refusal of the power of re-marriage, added to the ease with which the order may be obtained, may often prove a positive incitement to immorality. Broadly speaking, if the conduct of a man or woman is bad enough to make separation imperative, the partners in sorrow might, in common justice, be allowed to gratify natural desires to try to establish a happier home, with legal sanction. Too often, it is observable, separation is made the excuse for licence in illegal unions. The separated husband or wife gives as the excuse that they cannot marry, and single girls or men are led, through pity or from insufficient moral balance, to consent to live with a separated person in sin. Far better, if divorce be recognised at

all, to risk the ban of prejudiced people and the hazard of the second venture turning out no better than the first, and to divorce entirely. Due caution must, of course, be taken to see that divorce can never be obtained with such ease as the present magistrates' separation orders while making the process easier and cheaper than it now is. Self-respect will thus be preserved, and the general effect on the morals of the community much better, than if illegal unions were widely allowed and tolerated.

Without lowering the lofty standard and sanctity of marriage in any way, it must be allowed by all observant people that divorce in this country should be easier, cheaper, and juster. A woman should not be penalised just because she is a woman, but should in fairness be allowed to divorce a man for the same reasons exactly as those for which he might divorce her.

Divorce in these days of advanced civilisation should be granted on grounds other than the mere physical ones of adultery and cruelty, or even of desertion. It is intolerable to think of a healthy man or woman tied for life to a lunatic or a hopelessly diseased or medically unfit partner. Doctors' opinions should be allowed here, with proper safeguards against fraud, and the country as a whole would be in a happier and a healthier state could such advice be obtained and acted upon when desired.

Cheaper divorce is an absolute necessity, too, if the morals of the working classes are not to be vitiated. It is surely as important that a poor man, seeing how necessary a good wife may be to his domestic peace and happiness, should get freedom from a partner who is constantly impure, lazy or cruel, as it is for a rich man. It is, in fact, more so,

for the rich man can afford a hundred alleviations of his lot, while the poor one is dependent almost absolutely on his home surroundings for happiness.

English divorce law, take it altogether, is in as satisfactory a state, to judge by results, as any other, but that does not say that it does not need redress in some particulars. Along the lines we have briefly touched on above we believe such reformation should come if the marriage is to mean freedom and not slavery, if the tie is to bless as well as to bind.

Put briefly, the above, we believe, gives the findings of the Royal Commission on Divorce and Matrimonial Causes, published in 1912. Much water has run under the bridge since that date. Many causes have gone to alter, to purify, and, we believe confidently we shall find, to uplift national character within the last few years.

Substantially, however, British national character remains at bottom the same. There is at the heart of the Briton a passionate love of freedom, a rough but true idea of justice. That is why, observation leads us to think, the main theory of divorce for adequate reason appeals to him. That is why one of the opinions which came out in the evidence given at the Commission—"that all marriages are indissoluble"—will be resented by the majority of fair-thinking and commonsense reasoners. This is an opinion held in the main by the Churches, and by the Romish Church in particular. It is an opinion to which we think general public consent will never be given. Based as it is on certain readings of certain Scriptures, and on canonical law, hundreds of years old, it cannot fail to appear out of date. The argument that by this reasoning all the commandments will be considered out of date is by no means a valid

one. There is no direct commandment on the subject of divorce. The one which bears most directly upon it—the seventh—will be made more possible, we believe, for frail human nature's daily needs if we subscribe to the theory that marriages not only are, but should be dissoluble, on the grounds of "adultery, desertion, or any other serious ground based upon the necessities of human life." This is the finding of the Minority Report of the Commission—a finding which practically recommends that divorce with consent of both parties should be made legal. It ought to be possible to make such laws as will fully safeguard the highest interest of the land while making it absolutely apparent that marriage was a sacrament which, except for the gravest reasons, could not be broken. It is obvious that to mete out to every applicant for divorce absolute justice on these lines the individual wishes of the parties most concerned must be taken into account. When this is done we believe it will be found that both Church and laity will agree in supporting the view so tersely put by the women members of one Guild which gave evidence to the Commission, through its secretary :—

"Nothing but love should hold two together in this most sacred of all bonds."

That is the last word on the subject.

It is probable that divorce will be made much cheaper and more readily accessible than it now is; it is possible, but not probable, that it will be made easier. Nor within the limits we have set forth do we think this necessary. Once we have true ideas of the sanctity of the marriage bond divorce will be demanded only under conditions by which that sanctity is violated.

CHAPTER X.

THE PERFECT UNION.

“Love and joy are torches lit
From altar-fires of sacrifice.”

Coventry Patmore.

“God did not make woman from man’s head that she should rule over him; nor from his feet, that she should be his slave; but from his side, that she should be near his heart.”—*Talmud Proverb.*

“Marriages are made in heaven.”—*Old Proverb.*

“In the Resurrection there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage.”—*Matthew xxii. 30.*

“Nothing is a greater mark of a degenerate and vicious age than the common ridicule that passes on this state of life.”—*“The Spectator.”*

THE perfect union—where can it be found? A glance round any large circle of acquaintances, a brief recollection of confidences given by the married of both sexes, soon convinces one, alas! that it is so rare as to be almost unknown. Human nature being what it is, this state of things is, perhaps, perfectly natural. All the parts must be perfect to make a perfect whole, and it is rare indeed that temper, on the one hand, weds perfect patience; on the other, that meanness is met with noble generosity, carelessness with carefulness—in short, that one necessarily imperfect being may meet with another whose faults and virtues mutually balance their own.

Yet in this department, as in others in life, though, as Shakespeare has it, “’Tis not in mortals to command success,” yet all “may do more, deserve it,” and the only way to deserve success in the married

state is to take due care in entering it, and to keep on caring.

Love at first sight, as we have already seen, though good enough for courtship, should never be sufficient for marriage. In the courting days reason should come to the rescue of instinct, so that before venturing on the Great Unknown of the matrimonial sea its waters may have been charted, its depths sounded, its shallows duly measured, hidden reefs marked, dangerous currents allowed for; then, and only then, can one hope to make the harbour of the perfect union.

When all is said and done, however, Love is the great mystery. Just why a certain man should choose a certain woman, just why a certain woman should welcome attentions from one man from which she would fly from another, must ever remain the Riddle of the Universe.

To say that it is Nature's way is not to say all, either. Nature could continue the race without love on either side. Animal instinct and passion would guarantee that, but an all-wise Providence has arranged that the acts which go towards the propagation of the least of His creatures who is made "in His image" should be without displeasure, and it remains for us to see that by wise selection and temperate indulgence marriage should be that perfect union which God has designed it shall be.

To many, Chance, and not Providence, is the guide to matrimony. "How often the hand of Fate is concealed in the glove of Chance," they may say, and believe; yet in this supreme act of marriage we believe it to be true that "Man is the master of his Fate, the captain of his soul."

Fate may seem to throw you among worthless

acquaintances. Fate may make a pure girl attractive to a rake. Fate may put in the way of a good, hard-working, home-loving man a girl who has nothing but her good looks to recommend her. It is only weak natures, however, who accept what is nearest without reference to its fitness for the highest needs of their nature. Strong natures fight, and in fighting themselves gain additional strength, just as pulling against stream in rowing develops and hardens the muscles. Weakly to propose to a pretty girl because she is pretty, to accept the attentions of the first man who offers them, is to act the coward part in life. Better far a life of single blessedness than a married life without love, interest, or intelligence to guide and bind it.

“The happy marriage,” says an old writer, “is where two persons meet and voluntarily make their choice of each other without principally regarding or neglecting the circumstances of fortune or beauty.” Carefully considered, this sentence does indeed cover all the ground.

In marriage there should be the Triple Alliance—Mind, Body, and Estate. All three are under man’s control, and they are the most happily married who find in their mates all three in equal proportion.

In mind too much ideal is perhaps to be avoided as rigorously as too little. One must allow for human nature. If you question some men as to why they have never married they will answer with a sigh that they are still looking for their ideal. Questioned further, it seems that their ideal is a happy blend of angel and cook, with a little of the “artiste” thrown in. No idea ever enters such a man’s head that he may not himself be exactly ideal, either in appearance, temper, or habits, and when at last

he makes up his mind to do with someone "a little lower than an angel," it will be the shock of his life to have her say "No!"

Some girls, too, require of their lover that he shall combine with the appearance of a Romeo the money-getting power of a Rothschild. It is a salutary fact, but one seldom remembered by such girls, that the richest man in America is a confirmed dyspeptic and as bald as a billiard ball. He probably can't help either condition, poor rich man, but wealth and health seldom go hand in hand in this life.

It is all very well to hitch your personal waggon to a star. Ambition is an undoubted factor in success, but the matrimonial waggon is better hitched to a steady-going and dependable horse, and girls ambitious for success in matrimony should remember this.

The ideal man and the ideal woman perhaps seldom meet, but the ideal couple should be common, because opposites should marry, and it is easy to find the opposite of perfection.

Make up your mind that your other half shall be good and you yourself better, and the combination will be the best of its kind.

One drawback to a perfect union is that sometimes one of the partners in it is nothing more nor less than a married flirt. Such a nature is insatiable, and can never be happy, even with the entire love and admiration of one. Such people are vampires, either male or female, and when they have exhausted the pleasure-giving power of the one to whom they are legally joined, they look around for other victims. These found, good-bye to the happiness of ordinary married life. Nothing but a constant round of gaiety with admiration can satisfy the female vampire; nothing

but the amorous advances and embraces of other women can satisfy the male. Contrary to the general idea, married flirts never make the best husbands or wives. If they settle down at all it is because they have exhausted the capacity for true passion, satiety has set in, and they are utterly incapable of making their unfortunate partner happy.

Another bar to perfect happiness in the married state is sometimes found in the fact that the couple are too much together. This may sound absurd. Naturally they have married in order to spend all their lives together, but it is a fact that in order to do this successfully it is only wise to spend some of it apart.

Neither partner should forget that, though one flesh, they remain two minds. Because of her well-founded dread of the husband forgetting this many women of strong individuality prefer to remain for ever single. For that reason two people of pronounced originality of mind seldom make happy partners. If the woman is the stronger there is always the danger that she may "henpeck" her husband; if it is the man who has the most individuality, she is in danger of becoming a nonentity. It is never pleasing to be known as "Mr. B.'s wife" or "Mrs. B.'s husband," and however proud one ought to be of the fame of the better half, something in the instinctive appellation rankles.

Numberless instances in the lives of famous men and women occur to one to point the moral. Thomas Carlyle's wife, though a clever woman, was one of the most miserable in existence, not alone because of her husband's physical disabilities. The wife of Charles Dickens gave way to jealousy, which nearly wrecked their union. In both these cases the woman

would have been happier, probably, married to a man who would have allowed them to shine. They were too clever to suffer eclipse in silence. On the other hand, the wife of Gladstone was content to exist simply for the sake of caring for and sustaining her famous partner.

Very, very few are the cases in which genius can live happily with genius. The classic contradiction of this theory, the exception which proves the rule, is found in the union of Robert Browning and his poetess wife, Elizabeth Barrett. But then these were poets. Their joint life seems to have been lived far removed from the sordid realities of everyday happening. To the true poet all things are possible, even life with a rival poet.

No, the best way to live happily together is to live sometimes apart. Without going so far as to say that this should be done often, that the long summer holiday should be spent separately, for instance (although we know some happy couples who swear by this rule), yet it should be possible for both husband and wife now and again to spend a few days away from each other without the one left behind allowing the occasion to become an excuse for jealousy, envy, or temper.

The wife who gets a few days away with a woman friend, where she can talk "chiffons" to her heart's content, will come back to masculine society all the more eager for its broader outlook, its impatience with trivial detail. The man who goes for a short spell of golf, fishing, shooting, or what-not in purely masculine society will, on his return, welcome the comforts, the little attentions, the refinements of feminine society.

In ordinary daily life, too, it is possible to become

too familiar with the point of view of one's partner if that partner is never supposed to have an opinion of his or her own.

A woman would rather be treated in argument, for instance, as another man, than as an inferior being whose ideas must either be laughed at or sat on. The too acquiescent partner is as galling as the too contradictory.

"I'm afraid to go home to my wife," said one man who had been spending the evening with a friend.

"Why? Are you afraid she'll row you?"

"No, I'm afraid she'll forgive me," was the significant reply.

But while allowing fully for the development of personal individuality, the couple should never forget that union is strength. An old saying has it that matrimony halves a man's sorrows and doubles his joys, and, while this is perfectly true, most women would like to halve their partner's joys as well as his sorrows.

Many men run to their wives with every little worry, but keep the little bits of luck to themselves. They are quite willing to divide the big joys—the summer holiday, the rise in salary—these are faithfully shared, but the small, everyday pleasures which, after all, are the salt of life, these they think not worth taking together.

How many men, for instance, take it as their right that the Saturday half-holiday should be their holiday? "She has all the week to go out in," they argue, forgetting that for the loving wife half the pleasure in going out consists in going out with *him*. So every Saturday is taken up with golf, gardening, or some purely selfish pleasure which the wife is

expected to look on at and applaud, because it gives "poor George" a chance for a little recreation.

"I didn't know you played golf," I said recently to a little woman whom I met smartly attired in the latest golfing outfit and waiting for her husband on the local station.

"I don't," she smiled, "but I can talk golf, and walk golf, while George plays. You don't suppose I would let him go in for such an expensive game as golf alone? It would make him too selfish," and with a smile which meant volumes this wise halver of her husband's joys went gaily on her way.

Again, how many men there are who look on Sunday as their legitimate day of rest, careless of the fact that what is rest to them is hard labour to the woman who has been doing exactly that same sort of work all the week?

Yet any ordinary Sunday in summer may be a perfect orgy of new sensations if a man is willing to forego the old. Instead, therefore, of lying in bed until ten on Sunday, rising to eat the huge, hot, and dripping roast, the burnt sacrifice the woman offers weekly at the shrine of her husband's home-keeping, sleeping blindly through the pageant of the noon hours, and, high-hatted, frock-coated, and collar-choked, sitting out religiously the evening service in an ill-ventilated "place of worship," we would suggest a better way. This is not a way to be followed, though, when Ethel is grown up or Tommy more off-hand. Do it now. Other summers may be wet, or wetter. You may grow too old for the lure of open spaces, or too fat. Therefore, do it now. Get up at seven one Sunday—seven of a Sunday morning is a witching and mysterious hour, whatever it may be on other mornings. Don't call *her* yet. She

knows all about those other mornings. To cook your own rasher and boil your own kettle is a chastening and appetite-giving device. Try it. Try also washing the dishes while *she* cuts the sandwiches, and don't expect *her* to do all and yet not keep you waiting ten minutes after you are ready to start.

Now you are ready—holiday, not best, clothes on (nor yet business), lunch in your hand, take train or tram to your chosen country, and if you have chosen wisely you will probably reach some pretty village just as the church bells are sounding out their invitation. Go in there. No one knows you, and there is no one who will notice you haven't your Sunday go-to-meeting clothes on. By the time the service is over you will be ready for your lunch. Walking an hour in the sunlight, following the bees and the butterflies to some scented, gorse-decorated nook, will bring you to one o'clock, and now, having walked wisely and not too well, you will be ready to feed in like manner.

Ask *her* if this is not better than the sight of red flesh and the smell of burned fat, this incense that rises from the earth and is subtly compounded in its appeal to every sense, of the golden glory of bloom and buttercups, the scent of May, the touch of cool breezes on your cheek and of warm grass beneath your feet.

Perhaps you said good-bye to Romance the first week after your honeymoon. If so, you can say "How do you do?" to her now again. Your wife will not be too tired to enjoy your company here, not too hot to bear you near her, and, hand in hand, while the children roam wild in perfect safety, you can taste again the joy of pure passion, the rapture of Romantic Love.

Why not make every unexpected treat a "Great

Adventure " in this way, by enjoying it together, every Sabbath, a real *Sunday*? Believe me, love will live longer if it is fed on the unanticipated tit-bit than if it has to exist, year in and year out, on the hot, cold stew, hot, cold stew of every week.

We have spoken already of the physical attributes necessary to the perfect union. They are no less than the mental and spiritual. Mind and body should be in perfect accord. In the latter, probably, dissimilarity making for more perfect enjoyment and a more normal and healthy product. Physical repulsion, more even than mental indifference or spiritual difference, must spoil the perfect union. To be true mates each must feel for the other a certain amount of what is called "animal magnetism." But it must not be this magnetic affinity alone. Some men and women there are who exercise this influence on each other without there being between them a trace of other and higher communion. If such couples come together they are, at first, superlatively happy. Each is delighted in the bodily presence of the other. They "thrill" to a touch, a look. But after a little while, when passion is gratified, nothing is left on the hearthstone of Life but burnt-out ashes. With the decay of physical power comes that terrible coldness of attitude to each other which is the Death of Love.

"I have warmed both hands at the fire of Life," sings one poet. If that fire is lit on the altar of passion, and not of sacrifice, it will inevitably die. Each must love the other for what they are as well as for what they are able to give.

The third factor in our Triple Alliance—Estate—is last, but by no means least, as part of a perfect union. It is as well to remember, however, in this connection that poverty is a comparative term. "Give

us neither poverty nor riches " may be a reasonable request, but it needs definition before it can be granted. While one man's necessity is another's luxury, it is probably true that every man thinks his neighbour should manage on less than he himself needs. It is also true, too, that it is harder to spend wisely than to save. It is foolish saving, for instance, never to afford a holiday. Change of air and scene need not mean expensive lodgings at the seaside, at the most fashionable resort. Some families, however, would never dream of a holiday that cost them less than treble their income. You can often save more by taking a cheap holiday than by taking none at all. Plan out a holiday for your neighbour, whom you know can't afford much, and then take it yourself. That way you will often get an unexpected and a cheap trip.

Another fool's saving is on warm clothing and good boots. Cheap clothes are almost always dear. Better one good suit which pays many visits to the cleaner than many cheap ones which pay one visit—to the rag-bag.

Another foolish economy is to think you cannot afford to make your wife an allowance. The best wife in the world will be capable of making the table pay for her new costume if she has to dress " out of her housekeeping."

Imagine yourself without a wife, and think what a housekeeper or landlady would cost you, and act accordingly. Then, too, when you have made your wife an allowance and paid over what you can afford for housekeeping, don't demand the accounts as if you were a chartered accountant by profession and a Jew (traditional) by birth. Trust her. If she loves you she won't deceive or defraud you; if she doesn't

you won't be able to detect the fraud. There never yet was born a mathematician who could add up his wife's housekeeping account correctly, so what's the use of trying? Marriage may be a career, but it isn't a business, and you have no right to try to make it pay.

Another foolish economy for wives is to try and save out of her husband's clothes. Twopennyworth of salts of lemon may save his straw hat, it won't save his self-respect, and that is worth more than the cost of a straw hat. Help him to dress well by caring for his clothes when he has them, not by not caring whether he has them or not. "You look so nice in that new suit, dear. I think I'd like to take it to a theatre," was a sly compliment which earned an evening out for a wise wife. "I don't like to be seen out with my wife. She dresses too well for me," is often the reward of the wife who economises foolishly and selfishly in her husband's appearance. Though he may be an "old thing," any old thing won't do to dress him in, and it is a penny-wise and pound-foolish policy to act as if it would.

Don't save on your doctor's bills, either. Live well, according to your means; take plenty of exercise in the open air; don't despise simple pleasures, and you may never need a doctor. But accidents will happen, and when they do it is simple foolishness to say "I never have been ill. Why should I be now?" In China you pay a doctor to keep you well, and directly you are ill take something off his account. There is some sense in the idea, but it doesn't always act. An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure, true, but the curing is the essential part, and no one should grudge paying for it.

The best wife is the wife who can make a house

a home. This is a profoundly true saying, and one which no sensible man will contradict. But it takes two to make a home—let him not forget that either. Perfect union is not possible unless “two be joined,” and the only lasting matrimonial joint is that which is made with caution, cemented with love, and treated afterwards with care. Even Death will not break such a union as that.



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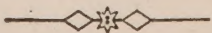
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